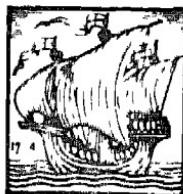


THE YOUNG CITIZEN'S
SOCIAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN

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by

PHYLLIS WRAGGE, M.A.



LONGMANS

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CHAPTER ONE

ABOUT WRITING HISTORY BOOKS

LET us imagine that you are going to write a book about the history of the place where you live. It may be a town or it may be a village. I wonder how you would begin?

Perhaps you would go to the public library to look for books which other people have written about it. If you live in the country you might ask your head-master to get you some books from the County Library. But suppose there aren't any books, or that they are mistaken in what they say! In any case they may not have everything in them which could have been said. So, although you may begin by reading what other people have written, you will also have to see what you can find out for yourselves. And this, after all, is what the people must have done who wrote the first history books—whether about some town or village, or about a country, or about the world.

So now we must think what ways there are of finding out how people lived and what they did hundreds of years ago. First, suppose you kept a diary and wrote in it.

Sept. 14th To-day our new school was opened. It has a lovely playing field. There are two netball courts and a tennis court. It has a garden. Each class is to have its own piece in which to grow things. There is a sand pit for the little ones. The classrooms have windows on both sides. On the sunny side the windows will slide back so that the

whole side of the room is open. The cloak-room has rows of bunks, with hot and cold water taps. There is a library with a lot of books—school books and story books. There is a room for the doctor and the nurse.

Nov. 12th. To-day Mummy took me to buy some winter clothes. I had a new coat which cost 3*s*, and a pair of Wellingtons which cost 9*s*.

Dec. 10th. To-day is Saturday, so we went to the shops to buy Christmas presents. We went to the Co-op. We bought a donkey on a stand for baby in the toy department and a yellow teapot with a green knob for Mummy in the china department, and a blue tie with red lines on it for Daddy in the men's clothing department. When we got home it was 5 o'clock, and Mummy had made a Sally Lunn for tea.

Supposing that you put your diary away in a cupboard in your house and it slipped down behind the boards and you never saw it again. A hundred years from now someone living in the house in which you live now might put his hand behind the board and find the old book. What could he discover about the way in which children lived in the middle of the twentieth century?

Well, people who lived hundreds of years ago have left behind their diaries and their account books and their letters. Sometimes they have been carefully kept in old houses, or in chests in the parish church and other safe places. Sometimes they are discovered by accident. They are not all written in books. Sometimes they are on rolls of parchment or vellum or paper, and are written in a handwriting which you would find difficult to read. Scholars use a

great many such old account books and diaries when they ate writing history books. Sometimes they have copied them out and had them printed so that you could read them. If there are any such which refer to your town or village you might find some interesting things in them.

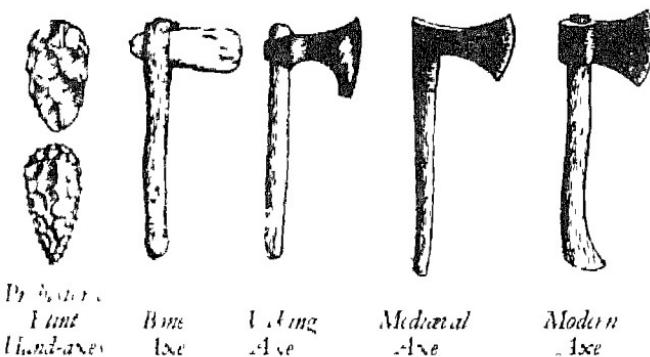
In the 13th century a monk living in one of the great monasteries, such as St. Albans or Durham, would be allowed to talk to the important visitors who came to the monastery guest-house. The King's chancellor or secretary might come, or a great judge, perhaps even the King himself with many of his servants. Whenever such visitors came the monk would hear from them about some of the things that were happening in the world outside the monastery. After the visitors had gone he would sit day after day at his desk in the cloister, with sheets of parchment, quill pens and inkhorn, writing down all he had heard and making pictures. Later, the sheets would be stitched together. Many of our pictures, such as that on p. 62, are copied from old chronicles. Some of the figures look out of proportion. This was not because people looked different in those days but because monk artists did not think what we call anatomy and perspective important.

But there are many things in history which we can discover without reading. Sometimes when an airman takes a photograph from his 'plane the print will show marks among growing crops which we cannot see from the ground. These may help us to trace the lines of a lost road or a buried camp or house. Sometimes when a ploughman is ploughing

up a pasture which has been grass for hundreds of years the ploughshare may strike something hard. If learned men are told about this they may get leave to come and dig up the field. There, buried for hundreds of years beneath grass and soil, they may find, as they dig, the foundations of a house built by the Romans nearly two thousand years ago, or perhaps even a whole town such as was found at Silchester near Reading.

Some things, too, you may perhaps discover for yourselves. If you live or go to stay in a part of the country where the soil is flinty, as you walk across the heath your eye may catch sight of a flint which looks different from the others. If you pick it up, you may find that it has been chipped and polished into the shape of a tiny arrow head, or possibly a chopper or an axe. Then you may be pretty sure that it was chipped and polished into shape by men who lived on the heath long before the Romans came. So long ago did they live that no one can be quite sure when it was. Perhaps you might be able to imagine that you see a figure crouching on the ground beneath that bent old thorn tree. His hair is long and tangled and he wears a loosely homespun tunic. He has a piece of flint in each hand. With the bit in his right hand he is chipping pieces off the other bit. He is clever. He knows just where to find the place to strike the flint in order to split off flakes and make it into the shape he wants. Later he will polish it by rubbing it in sand. Perhaps when it is finished he will bind it with fibre or roots into a split stick and so make himself a handle.

In Norfolk and Sussex flint mines have been discovered beneath the ground. They were quarried out by these early miners who have left behind some of their picks made of deer horn and some of their little lamps hollowed out of chalk, in which they must have burnt a wool wick floating in melted fat.

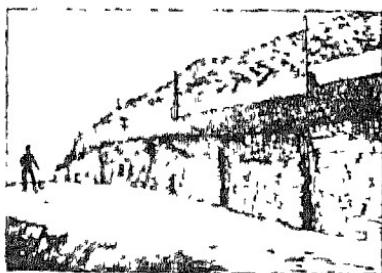


THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AXE

Men have discovered some of the homes of these early people, homes built on platforms over marshes, and sometimes the remains of homes built of trees and stones in the open country. If you live or stay near the Pennine Hills or the Welsh Mountains or the great chalk downs of southern England, you may be able to find traces of them for yourselves. Perhaps one day on the top of a high hill you will notice that the earth has been disturbed. Instead of sloping smoothly it has been shaped into deep ditches and high mounds. If you follow one of these ditches you will perhaps find that it runs all round the hill. Above it the earth has been thrown

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up into a great wall. At one point there may be a gap. Farther up the hill perhaps there will be another ditch and wall, but the gap in this one will not be opposite to the gap in the outer one. What you have found is a camp where in ancient days men took refuge from their enemies, with their wives and children and animals. From their hill top they could see all the country round and the valleys below them filled with thick forest and undergrowth and marsh and flooding rivers.

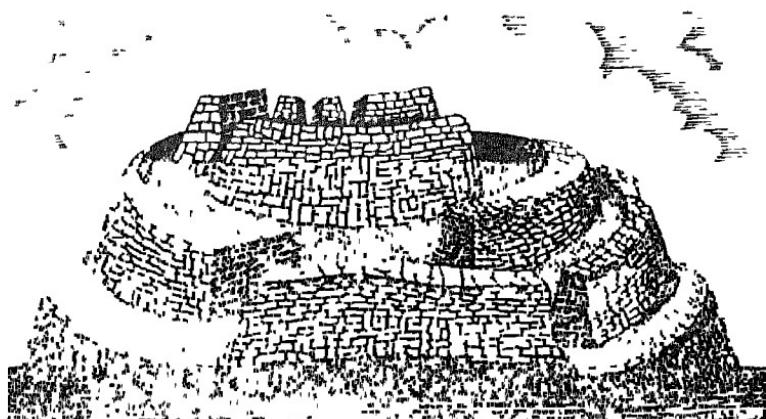


The picture shows what was discovered when Maiden Castle was excavated

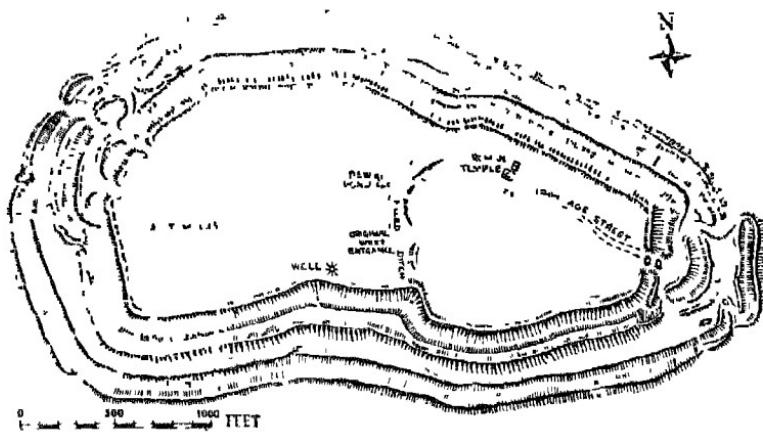
You may find their roads, too, and the roads of the Romans who came long after them—straight grassy tracks running across the hills. Along them flocks of sheep must have been driven to fairs in ancient days. Pedlars with baskets of flints, or pottery or bronze, must have toiled along them. Later perhaps Roman soldiers used the same tracks as they marched with ringing armour from camp to camp.

But it is not only in holiday places that we can discover history for ourselves. The names of our towns and villages, hills and rivers will often tell us

PLAN AND RECONSTRUCTION OF MAIDEN CASTLE,
DORSET



What do you think the plan must have looked like when first built?



This is a plan of a camp such as described on page 6. Look in a book on pre-history to find what a dry-pond is, also a tumulus. What can you discover from the fact that there is a Roman temple marked on the plan?

Plan by R. M. Wheeler in The Antiquaries Journal, Vol. XVII.

who were the first people to settle there. Names* ending in *ingham* and *ington* were the homesteads or townships of the earliest English folk who came over the sea to this country from the shores of the Baltic. Places whose names end in *by* and *thorpe* were the homes of the Norsemen. Some names which have the syllable *Fm* or *Thng* mark the places where their wise men met to declare the custom of the folk and punish people who did wrong.

Names of the fields in our parishes and streets in our towns may be full of history, too. *Cumbergate* is the street where men combed the sheep's wool ready for the spinners in the fourteenth century. Perhaps at *Pie Corner* were the cook shops tempting with fresh pastry. Down *Cheapside* were the market stalls at which men could "cheap" or "chaffer"—that is bargain for goods.

Even our own names speak sometimes of the work our forefathers did years ago. The *Webers* and *Wearers* worked the weaving looms, the *Smiths* shod the horses and mended the ploughs. The *Penders* looked after the strayed cattle and shut them up in the village pound. The *Arrowsmiths* and the *Fletchers* made bows and arrows.

Some of us have names which seem to show that our ancestors came over with the Danes or Norse-

* Names which have the syllable *ber*, *bir* (head), *comb* (valley), *tor* (hill), *at* (water), *er*, *er*, or *er* (enclosure or yard), and many names of rivers, such as *Eso*, *Axe*, *Esl*, *Ouse*, *Tees* and *Trent*, were given by the British people in the heath when the Romans came. So were names in Scotland, Ireland and Wales, which have the syllable *Llo*, *L*, *Ar*, *An*, *Ber*, *er* and *Per*.

Look at the map of place names on page 28

men. Some have French names and may have come over with William the Conqueror, or they may have settled in London as silk weavers in the days of Queen Elizabeth, or perhaps they escaped from France in the days of the French Revolution, about a hundred and fifty years ago.

In towns and villages, too, there is plenty of history to be discovered by looking at the buildings. We can of course learn how to tell when our churches were built, and why we have a castle. But there are all sorts of other buildings, too, which have a history. Perhaps there is a great barn by the church which has a date on it. There may be a guildhall, or almshouses or houses or cottages with dates. All these have their history if only we can find it out. They will show us, too, which are the oldest parts of our town or village, and whether the chief roads have always run where they are now. Perhaps we can find an old "hump-back" bridge or an unbridged river flowing across a road, or a toll house, to remind us of the days when men travelled on horseback or in heavy waggons or coaches, and the roads were soft and muddy tracks.

So you see History books do not "just come of themselves". They are written by people who have studied old books and parchment, and have kept their eyes open and tried to understand the meaning of the things around them. And there is not one of us who could not, if he tried, make a little history book of his own by looking about with sharp eyes on his town or village, using his commonsense and asking questions.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROMANS COME TO BRITAIN

LET us imagine that we can travel on some magic carpet backward through time. We will travel past the time of our grandfathers, and of our great-grandfathers, farther and farther back until we come at last to about the year 46 A.D., so long ago that many of the companions of Jesus Christ were still living in Palestine, and Paul, His great missionary, was teaching, in a city called Antioch.

But our carpet shall not put us down in the lands on the shores of the Mediterranean sea where Jesus and his friends lived and worked. We will land on this island of Britain and try to discover what it is like. Let us imagine that we see a young man coming towards us. He is tall and fair, and wears a short tunic with a belt round his waist, and a cloak fastened on one shoulder. His legs are bare from the knee to the ankle, but he is wearing a pair of soft leather boots. Perhaps his name is Maximus. He is a soldier, but he is off duty so he has laid aside his helmet and his metal corslet and his shield. Our magic carpet has given us the power to understand other languages, so though he does not speak English he will tell us where he has come from, and what he has seen and done in Britain.

"My home", perhaps he will say, "is over the sea, near the mouth of the great river Rhine. My father and my father's father always lived in the same place. We are Germans, but we are proud to be citizens of

the Roman Empire and to be loyal to the Emperor. As soon as I was old enough I became a soldier in one of the legions of the Roman Army. It is called the Twentieth Legion, and three years ago we were told that we were to march under the great general Aulus Plautius to conquer Britain.



ROMAN TILE

Leg XX shows that this tile was part of the roof of a building occupied by the twentieth legion. Notice the shield and spears.

"One of the centurions (captains) of our legion, who is a learned man and loves reading, told me that nearly a hundred years ago Julius Caesar brought an army and landed in Britain. He wrote a book about what he saw and the battles he fought. But he could not stay in this island, so far from Rome, so near the very edge of the world, and it was not till Claudius became Emperor that it was possible for our army to come back and make these Britons obedient to the Roman law.

"We landed easily, for the people were not expecting us. They fled to the forests and marshes when our ships were seen drawing near. But their kings (for they are divided into several different kingdoms) soon gathered their armies together again, and we have had some stiff fighting. The Britons are brave. They fight from chariots and on horseback and they manage their horses cleverly in the midst of the noise of battle. But they do not wear metal corslets and helmets as we do, and, though their captains are daring, they are not as wise and careful as ours. So in the end we are generally victorious, and we have carried the Roman eagle standard far to the west and south of the island. Beyond are mountains and moors. Into these wild and desolate places we have not tried to march."

If we ask Maximus what sort of people the islanders are and how they live, perhaps he will tell us that he has friends among them now. If we should like to visit them he will take us to one of their houses. He will lead us by a straight road which runs along the top of some high ground. It is raised on a ridge, and is about six feet wide. The surface is paved with flat stones on which our shoes make a hollow clattering noise. From the hill top we can see its white surface running straight ahead of us for miles. Below in the valley are thick woods and here and there the shining waters of a river. The hillside looks as though it has been cut into terraces, each separated from the one below it by a kind of wall of stone. On each terrace corn is growing. Half-way down the hill is something which may be a

village. The road runs by it, so that we shall be able to see it more closely by and by.

"Our legion made this road," Maximus may tell us. "Fifty miles of it we built between one camp and the next. We built the camps too."

"How did you do that?" we shall ask.

"Well, first the centurion made us peg out a large square of ground. We dug a deep ditch all round it throwing the earth up to make a high wall inside. In each wall we left a gate-way and we carried a bridge across the ditch and made roads inside the camp from gate to gate, crossing in the middle. Then we put up the tents, with the officer's tent in the centre, and the tents for the men in long rows on either side of the roads."



ROMAN LEGIONARIES

But by this time Maximus is walking so fast down the hill that we have no breath left for asking questions. At last we come to the village. Perhaps it will look strange to us. There are no rows of brick or stone cottages facing on to a village street, no shops, no school, no church. The houses stand scattered about on the hillside. Instead of being square they are round. The walls are made of tree trunks driven into the ground with twigs woven into a kind of basket-work between. The steeply sloping roofs are thatched with straw or reeds cut



ROMAN
WILTON
From a 4th century
MS. in the
British Museum.

from the rivet in the valley. Thin curls of blue wood-smoke rise from holes in the roofs, for there are no chimneys. Outside the cottages there are beehives, and a few fruit trees—apples and cherries.

The door of one cottage is open. We can see the one room inside. It has a floor of trodden earth and in the centre rises a great tree trunk which supports the roof. Not far from this trunk a stone is let into the floor, and on this a log fire is burning. Over

it an iron pot is slung on a tripod and there is a smell of stewing meat. Near the door are a woman and two girls. They are dressed in gaily coloured sleeveless dresses of coarse wool, drawn in round the waist with a girdle. The woman is sitting on a pile of animal skins. In front of her stands a great weaving frame made of two upright tree trunks, with a third lashed across them at the top. The warp threads are thrown over this cross beam, and weighted with heavy stones at the bottom so that they hang straight down almost to the floor. Those at the front of the loom are kept separated from those at the back by slender rods suspended by leather thongs from the cross beam. These form what is called in weaving a "shed". The woman is passing her bone shuttle threaded with the "weft" through the shed, raising back and front threads alternately, as though she was darning.

The elder of the two girls is standing in the doorway. She has a stick or distaff with a lump of raw wool on it tucked under her left arm. With one hand she pulls out the threads, and with the other she twists the little spindle wort, made of clay, and so spins the wool into yarn. The younger girl has an earthenware bowl on her knee and is kneading a cake of bread made of coarse brown-looking flour, mixed with honey.

Maximus shows us the two big stones near the door between which the woman and her daughter ground the corn this morning. It is getting towards evening, and as we pass beyond the village the men and boys are returning from the day's work. They all wear wool tunics fastened round the waist with leather belts, and long woollen trousers bound loosely round their legs with soft strips of leather or linen. Some of the young boys are driving goats and cows, for the herds must not be left out all night lest wild animals or wilder men should attack them.

Men have been cutting the corn on the hillside. Some carry sickles of iron with teeth in the blade. Others are bringing home bundles of brushwood which they have cut from the forest with their iron bill-hooks. A few are returning from a long journey to a great fair, where men from many different villages have met and exchanged things which they did not need for things they needed. These men have bundles of wool on their backs and have come back with woven wicker baskets full of brass pots, iron knives and saws, and perhaps some

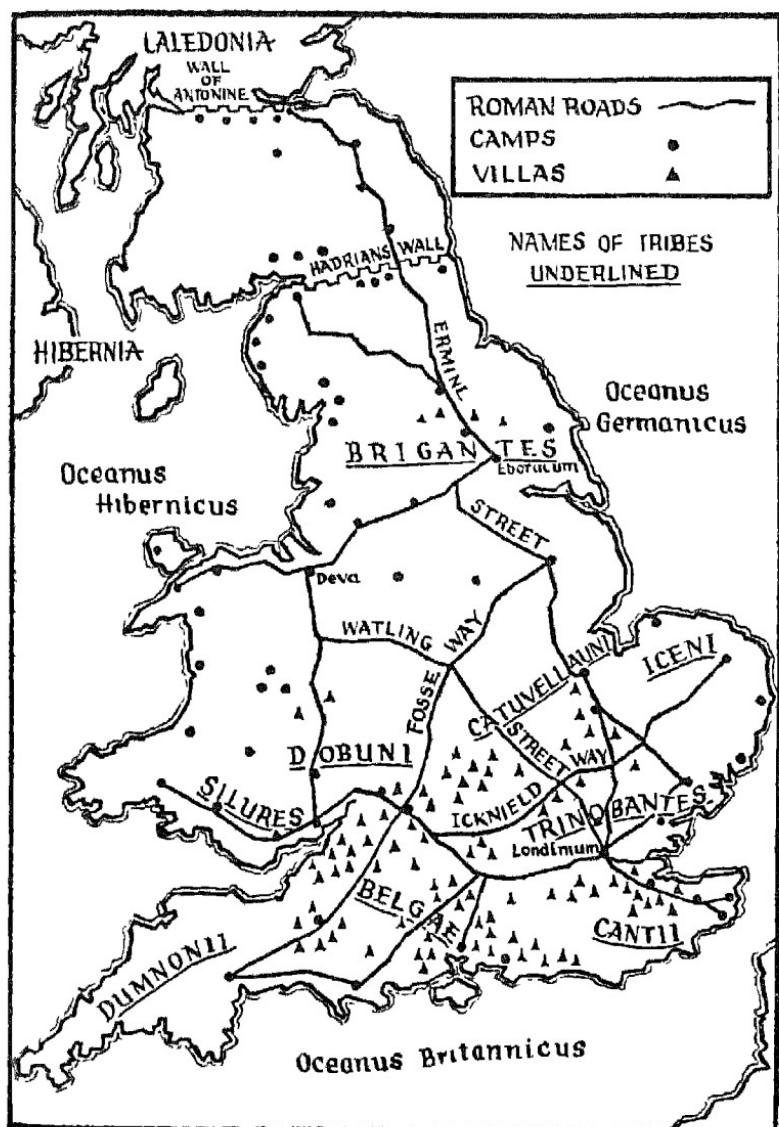
strings of beads for their wives and some brooches of bronze and enamel to fasten their own cloaks.

But now we must hurry on before darkness falls. In a little while we turn off the road which Maximus helped to build. We are on a narrower grassy track which mounts again above the valley with its wood and marshy river banks. Soon we see high turf walls towering above us. "That is the town where my friend lives," says Maximus. "In this part of the country people do not care to live in the valleys. In rainy weather the rivers overflow their banks. The valleys, too, are mostly full of woods, and there is no space to grow corn."

Now we have passed through the entrance and are within the town. I do not know whether we shall see shops here, but the people have money to buy things they need. The houses are much like those we noticed in the village, but they are larger and sometimes there is a separate hut for the kitchen. Maximus stops in front of one of these larger houses. The leather curtain which hangs over the doorway is drawn aside, and we find ourselves in a good-sized round-shaped room like the one where the woman was weaving.

The master of the house has just come in. He is tall and has fair hair. It is long, falling on to his shoulders, and he has long moustaches. He is dressed in a fine woollen shirt and tunic, and long loose trousers which are tied with ribbons round his ankles. He is taking off his cloak, which is fastened by a beautiful brooch made of bronze and decorated with enamel. His belt is of fine leather studded with

ROMAN BRITAIN



amber stones, and on his large fingers he wears rings. His wife comes to take his cloak from him. She wears her fair hair in long plaits. Her dress is cut in one piece. It, too, is made of fine wool beautifully dyed. Round her waist she wears a loose girdle with many jewels in it. On her fingers are rings, and on her arms bracelets. She wears a long chain of amber beads. As she and her husband talk we might notice that many of the words they use are like those used by Welsh people or people of the Scottish Highlands to-day.

When they see us they turn to welcome us as friends of their friend Maximus. Soon we are drinking milk from beautifully decorated bronze bowls, and perhaps eating honey cakes. A roast wild duck is brought in from the kitchen hut, and the master of the house draws his iron knife from his belt and gives us each a portion. As we have no knives or forks we must eat it with our fingers. Maximus has gone to talk to the daughter of the house. She, too, is fair and is dressed like her mother. She is sitting on a pile of skins, sewing by firelight, for there is no other light in the house. Her needle is made of bone. She is embroidering a belt. Her name is Branwen.

Since our magic carpet has made us able to understand other languages, we are soon talking to our host and hostess. We admire their house, and they tell us that they like it and they like to live on the hillside. "Some of the people who live in the west of the island", they say, "have made towns for themselves on platforms of tree trunks and earth which they have built in the middle of marshes.

Other people live in large caves in the hillsides. We meet them sometimes at the great temple to which we go at midsummer to worship the Sun God." Perhaps Maximus meant that they went to Avebury in Wiltshire. There is still a great circle of standing stones here, with an enormous ditch or earthwork and a number of tumuli or barrows which early men threw up over the places where their heroes were buried. We cannot be sure that Avebury was used partly as a temple, but it is very likely.

Perhaps we may become so much interested in these people of long ago that we shall want to read Julius Caesar's book for ourselves. If we do we shall find that he says they "sow no corn, but live on milk and flesh, and are clothed in skins. All the Britons . . . dye themselves with woad, which gives them a blue colour, and makes them look more terrible in battle." He was probably thinking of the people who lived in the north of Britain, who seem to have been wilder folk than those of the south and west.

There are many things we still do not know about these islands and the people who lived in them when the Romans came, but more things are discovered almost every year. Perhaps some of you, when you are grown up, will help to find out more about them.

CHAPTER THREE

WHAT THE ROMANS TAUGHT THE BRITONS

IT is very likely that after a time the Roman soldier, Maximus, would marry the British girl Branwen. Their children and their children's children would grow up in Britain. Some perhaps would be soldiers, some merchants, some farmers. If we could come back to this country about the year 200 A.D. when Branwen's great-great-grandchildren were getting old and had little grandchildren of their own, we should find the country looking much the same in many ways.

Thick woods and swampy rivers still choke the valleys. Straight over the hill top still run the white stretches of the Roman roads—and no such fine roads were made again till modern times. The camps are still there, but where tents had once stood wooden barracks have been built, and even these are often empty now. There are not many Roman soldiers to be seen, except in such cities as York, and in the far north, where a great stone wall, called Hadrian's Wall, with camps along its course, marks the boundary of Roman rule.

If we could visit the country home of one of Branwen's great-great-grandchildren, we should find it very different from the British home in which she herself was brought up, but it may have been not unlike the house in which Maximus lived before he came to Britain. It would probably stand on the

side of a hill, or at least on land where there was little marsh or forest, and where corn could be easily grown. We might pass first through its cornfields, still arranged in terraces if they are on the hillside. The farm workers will perhaps be slaves; that is, they were bought in the market by their masters and not free to leave him as farm workers are to-day. Their cottages may be very like those we saw in the village in the last chapter, but they may have more decorations and a different way of keeping warm, which we shall see later in their master's home.



A Roman Villa.

Soon we shall come within sight of the house, or villa as it would be called by the Romans. Its red-tiled roofs show above the garden wall. As we pass through the great gates in the wall we shall come into a large grassy courtyard, with wooden sheds and barns at the sides. In front of us may be another wall or perhaps a thick hedge with a gateway cut in it.

Beyond the gateway is a garden with lawns and hedges and straight paths, and perhaps a pool of water into which a little fountain plays. Here and there are small plaster statues of gods and goddesses.

The house runs along two sides of the garden and has an open verandah and a heavy leather curtain which forms the front door. We shall perhaps be met by a slave wearing a short tunic. He will lead us from the little entrance hall through another curtain, into a square room. Here, perhaps, the lady of the house will meet us. She wears a long loose



MOSaic FLOORS IN A ROMAN HOUSE

The floor is made of slabs of coloured stone. The floor is supported on beams under which hot air pipes ran.

robe of wool gathered in with a girdle at her waist, and falling in heavy folds to her feet. The sleeves are long and wide. She carries a fluted fan in her hand, and her hair is coiled up at the back of her head.

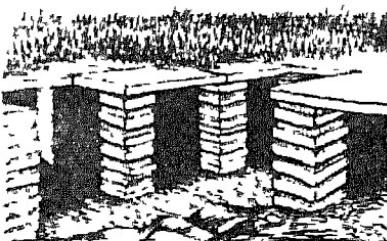
She will probably be called by a Roman name such as Claudia or Volumnia. She will speak to us in Latin, the language of the Romans, though she can talk in the old British language too, and will probably use it when she is speaking to her slaves. She will perhaps show us her house. We shall notice that there are neither wallpapers nor carpets, but the rooms are bright and warm. The walls are painted with pictures of fruit and flowers, or perhaps of

dogs and men hunting deer. The floors are paved with mosaics, that is, tiny bits of brightly coloured stone made into patterns, circles and diamonds and other shapes. There is no fire-place, though if it is very cold, there may be a sort of metal basket

on legs which holds a small fire, perhaps of coals. If we ask why the room is so pleasantly warm, Claudia will tell us that the floor is supported on piles of small tiles, and that pipes run underneath them carrying hot water from a big furnace room at one end of the house.

There is probably not a great deal of furniture in the room, but there will be a few chairs and small tables, perhaps one or two statues, and some red bowls with raised figures of slender dogs and deer running round them.

The rooms open one out of another, but they can also be reached from the verandah corridor which runs round the house. Perhaps Claudia will take us to see the baths at one end of the house. There is not just one bathroom with a single bath in it, as most of us have in our houses to-day, but a large warm bath heated by the hot pipes under the floor, another room which has a kind of cold swimming bath, and several rooms which have no water in them but which are of varying heat, so that it is possible to



ROMAN CENTRAL HEATING

Notice that grass is growing on the floor in this picture. Read to the end of the chapter to see why

have a hot air bath in one and then pass to the cooler rooms before going out into the open air.

Perhaps there may be a nursery somewhere for Claudia's grandchildren. The little girl will be dressed like her grandmother, but her robe will be pulled up under her girdle so as to make it short in order that she may run about easily. The boy, if he is very small, will wear a tunic. When he is about twelve years old he will be considered nearly grown up. Then he will be solemnly dressed in a soft woollen toga—a length of white stuff which is passed over the left shoulder and arm, brought round in front under the right arm, and fastened with a brooch on the left shoulder again, covering the whole tunic except the right sleeve. He and his little sister will have toys to play with, and an old and trusted slave will be their nurse.

Perhaps Claudia will tell us that her husband built this house when he and she were first married. It was built by British workmen, but they had been taught by Roman builders how to use bricks and to make heating chambers and baths and coloured stone floors.


 "Now that my son is married and has children and we all live together," perhaps she will say, "we begin to need more rooms. We shall soon have some more built on the third side of the garden, facing the baths."

On the following day we may perhaps visit a neighbouring town. Our road leads us past a high turf wall enclosing a large

space of ground. This is where the old town stood when Branwen was alive. No one lives there now. The people have gradually moved into a new and better town built, a few miles away, by workmen who have learnt new ways of planning and building from the Romans. Instead of the houses standing anyhow as they did in the old town, the streets run at right angles to each other, so that if we could look down upon them from an aeroplane they would look rather like a chess or draught board.* The houses may be built of timber and plaster or of bricks. There is plenty of garden space between the backs of those which face one street and the backs of those on the next street. If we make our way to the centre of the town we shall find ourselves in a wide market place. Opposite to us is a splendid town hall. Here are the offices to which people must go to pay their taxes, and others where judges sit to help to settle their disputes. On the other sides of the market square are rows of shops. They have a kind of verandah supported on pillars, running all the way in front of them, so that it is possible to look in the shops comfortably even when it is raining. The rain water is carried by pipes off the sloping roof of the verandah into a gutter below.

The shops have square open fronts. There are no



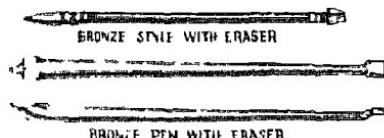
POTTERY FLUE

TILE:

It is the kind of tile through which the hot air passed to warm the rooms and baths

* You will find a plan of the Roman town of Silchester on page 176

great plate glass windows and doors such as we have to day. One of them is perhaps a toyshop. Another sells basins and beakers and jars and bowls. Many of these are like those which we saw in Claudia's house. If we ask the shopman where they come from he will say "From Duroborivae (Castor) where the great pottery kilns are." If we explore the town further we shall probably find one or more small



*If Claudia's grandchildren had a slave
as tutor he would use the stylus for writing
on tablets and the pen for writing on
parchment or vellum. The tablets were
sometimes used by children much as
slates were used a hundred years ago.*

Look at the picture on page 162

buildings—perhaps round or rectangular, with colonnades of pillars supporting the roof on the outside. These are the temples to which the citizens of the town come to bring fruit and corn and wine and kids as sacrifices to the gods—the Sun-God, or the God of War or the Goddess of Water. Perhaps we may even find a tiny Christian church—not unlike our chutches in shape inside, with a nave and aisles separated by rows of pillars supporting the roof.

Almost certainly we shall find the public baths—a fine building, with hot and cold water baths and hot-air baths, like those in Claudia's house only much bigger. Outside the town will be a theatre—shaped like our theatres, but with the seats cut out

ROMAN BRITAIN

BC TO AD

BC



A BRITISH HUT

JULIUS CAESAR
INVADES
BRITAIN

BC



AD



CONQUEST BY CLAUDIUS



DEFEAT OF BOUDICCA



A ROMAN VILLA

HADRIANS WALL



A ROMAN MILESTONE



A ROMAN
GATEWAY

SEVERUS VISITS BRITAIN



A ROMANO-BRITISH
POTTERS WHEEL



ROMAN TEMPLE



A ROMAN
LEGIONARY

SAXONS
RAVAGE EAST COAST



A SAXON



in tiers from the side of a hill and open to the sky. Here the townsfolk will come to watch wrestling and weight-throwing and perhaps more cruel sports such as bull-fighting and bear-baiting.

We shall see in the next chapter what happened to these Roman towns and villas. Now they lie for the most part hidden beneath the soil of our countryside, or built over by our cities and villages. From time to time learned men and women get permission to dig where they know the Roman towns are buried. Such towns have been found near St Albans in Hertfordshire and Wroxeter in Shropshire. The great baths at Bath still stand. The pottery kilns of Castor near Peterborough, and the houses in which the potters lived lie all along the road from Peterborough to Wansford. Parts of villas are constantly being discovered up and down the countryside of southern England, while in the far north Hadrian's Wall, with its camps and forts, still runs for mile upon mile over the moors between Wallsend and Carlisle. Keep your eyes open to see what you can find near your own home belonging to those far-off days, and visit the local museum to look at the Roman "remains".



*CELTIC, DANISH AND ANGLO-SAXON
PLACE-NAMES*



CHAPTER FOUR

SAXONS, ANGLES AND NORSEMEN

IF we had a map of England and two coloured pencils, one red and one blue, we might with the red pencil underline all the places we could find whose names end in *ing* such as Reading, *ingham* such as Nottingham, and *ington* such as Darlington. Then with the blue pencil we might underline all the names we could find ending in *by* such as Raby, or *thorpe* such as Scunthorpe. When we had done this, our red pencil would show some of the earliest homes of the Anglian and Saxon people in England, and our blue pencil the homes of Danes and Norsemen who came later.

The name Reading was once Readingas, and meant "Reada's sons" or "Reada's folk", while Nottingham was once Snotingaham and meant "the farm of Snot's folk", and Darlington was Deornington, and meant "the farm of Deornoθ's folk". These are all Old English words, but *by* generally comes from a Norse or Danish word meaning a farm or village, and *thorpe* from a Danish word meaning a hamlet or small village.

It is interesting to try to understand the meaning of the name of the place where we live, but it is often difficult to do, so that though we may make guesses for ourselves we must always remember that we cannot be sure that we are right until we have asked someone who really understands these things.

Let us turn again to our underlinings. It looks as though some new folk had come over in bands or families to live in this country. And so indeed it was.

For nearly two hundred years people such as Claudia and her son and grandchildren had lived peacefully in their towns and villas. They had been to the shops to buy and sell, the children had gone to school and had learnt to speak and write in Latin as well as in their own language. They had worshipped the gods in their temples. Some of them had heard Christian missionaries preach, had learnt about Jesus Christ, and had built little Christian churches. In the terraced fields slaves had toiled at ploughing, sowing and reaping. There were very few soldiers in the country, and about the year 409 A.D. even these had been sent for by the Emperor to return to Gaul to defend its villas and cities against the attacks of wild and cruel enemies.

For beyond the boundaries of the lands over which the Romans ruled, men they had never conquered were growing restless. These barbarians were not very good farmers, and their wives and children often went hungry because the harvest had failed. They had heard of the corn and the cattle and the richly furnished houses, the shops and markets full of lovely things, in the lands where the Romans ruled. Some of them wanted food and some of them wanted plunder and adventure, and they began to move across the boundaries of the Roman Empire in great bands—Vandals and Goths, Lombards, Franks, Huns, Angles, Saxons and Jutes.

SIMILARITIES OF SAXONS, ANGLES AND JUTES



Somewhere between the years 350 and 450 A.D. the peaceful people of Britain began to hear stories of wild men, Picts and Scots, suddenly appearing from beyond the great wall between Carlisle and Walls-end. They would steal upon a peaceful village and carry off the corn and cattle in the night. From over the sea other strangers in long rowing boats crept through the darkness of a moonless night or the morning mists of spring and autumn. They rowed into harbour mouths and up rivers, plundering and burning. These were tall fair-haired men—Angles and Saxons—whose homes were along the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic, in the countries we now call Holland and North Germany.

They were brave, for they did not fear to cross the stormy seas in their open rowing boats, but they were wild and cruel, too. They had never heard of Christianity. Over the camp fire at night they told stories of Woden the father of the gods, of Thor and his hammer, of Freya who brings in the Spring, and of Loki the mischief maker. To them the marshes and wild heaths were the homes of dragons and other monsters, and they thought goblins might lurk near their houses.

At first they probably only came to plunder, but when they found that there were hardly any soldiers in Britain, and that there were plenty of trees for building houses and boats and making ploughs, and plenty of corn, some of them decided to leave their old homes for ever and settle in this land.

Sometimes to-day when men are ploughing or digging a new drain or laying the foundations of a

house near a river, they find—as they did at Bradford-on Avon in Wiltshire—the burial grounds of these Saxon and Anglian invaders and settlers. Buried in their graves are swords and brooches, for they believed that they would need them in the shadowy land to which they thought they were going when they died. These early burial grounds seem generally to lie along the banks of rivers, so we think that the invaders did not leave their boats behind them by the shore, but sailed up the rivers until they found some dry ground, gravel or rock, on which to build their new homes.

The native inhabitants of Britain did not stand much chance against the ruthless invaders. If they existed, their villas and towns and villages would be burned or thrown to the ground. Probably a good many of them did not fight. Then the newcomers seem to have left them to live in their old villages on the hillsides. But the Saxons and Angles built new homes in the river valleys. They called the villages, where the British people lived, Weala-un or Weala-cot, or sometimes Brittas-tun, names which mean the village of the Welsh, or the village of the Britons. These old names are still used to-day. We call them Walton or Walcot or Bretton. The people who lived in them must have gone on ploughing their fields and tending their cattle, and some of them still worked as potters and metal workers and sold their bowls and brooches to their new English neighbours. Some of them may have had to work for the English as slaves. They were probably sad and poor.

Perhaps some of these English pirates who invaded Britain brought their little grandchildren with them to their new homes. By the time the grandchildren of these grandchildren were growing up, Snot's folk and Deornoth's folk had done much more than build whole villages of wattle and daub or timber houses. They had also cut down large parts of the forest round their homes, and grubbed up the tree roots and undergrowth. Their heavy ploughs, drawn by eight slowly moving oxen, had ploughed up the soil, and now round the village were three great fields.

Each year one field was sown with wheat or rye for making bread, the next was sown with barley for brewing ale, while the third was resting—waiting to be sown again the following year. In the meantime the cattle were allowed to roam over it, feeding on the stubble and the weeds which sprang up in the summer. Where the woodland had been left uncut, the village pigs fed on the acorns and beech nuts, guarded by the village swineherd, and now and again the villagers came to cut wood for their fires, or for making or mending their ploughs and their tables and stools and plates and oxen yokes.

Beyond the village stretched miles of rough heath or wasteland, covered with gorse and heather or low-growing bushes of hazel and birch. Here the cows which were not kept in the stubble field would be feeding. There would be a hayfield near the river, but there was still no church.

You know the stories of St. Columba of Irelan

d and St. Augustine of Rome, and how they came as

missionaries to these lands. Their work was carried on by other monks, Aidan and Cuthbert in the north, Felix and Fursey and Paulinus in the south and east. These men toiled to bring the story of a God of Love to men and women and children who had lived in fear of angry or cruel gods and goddesses, of strange monsters and spiteful goblins. Over pathless hills and moors these missionaries wandered, sometimes not knowing whether they would find food and a welcome at the end of the day, or whether fierce men would throw stones at them and drive them away. Little by little men came to trust them, and to learn the story of Jesus which they told. Some men gave them land and helped them to build little churches of wood or stone.

Sometimes the sound of an axe would be heard on some lonely island or river bank. Men were cutting down trees to build a home, or monastery, for a band of monks—men who had promised to give all their lives to serving God and worshipping Him. Soon within the monastery a school was set up. Young men and boys came to learn to read and write in Latin, to sing and to say the Psalms. What they had learnt they went into the villages round about and taught others.

In the far north of England a young noble or thane called Benet Biscop decided to become a monk. He crossed the sea and travelled to Rome, and to a monastery school at a place called Leuins in France. When he came home the king of that northern part of England called Northumbria (north of Humber) gave him some land at the mouth of the river Wear.

Here on either side of the river he built monasteries. One in the village of Wearmouth he called after St. Peter. The other which stood on the opposite bank of the river in the village of Jarrow he called after St. Paul.

To this second monastery there was brought one day a little boy called Bede. He was only seven years old, but he longed to learn to read and write and sing. In the monastery he found all sorts of wonderful things going on. Benet, who was called Abbot or father by the monks, had invited glass-workers and stone-masons to come over the sea from France and Italy to teach his monks how to make glass lamps for the monastery church, and how to cut and carve in stone, how to cast bells and make knives. A monk called John had a special class of boys and young men whom he was teaching to chant the psalms and the Latin service as they were chanted in Rome. In the walls of the monastery were fixed cupboards full of precious books, beautifully written, with their capital letters coloured in blue and red and gold, and their heavy bindings decorated with shining stones.

There was one room in the monastery where monks who could write specially beautifully, made copies of the most precious books. These were given to other monasteries or churches which had need of them. Here, when he grew up, Bede spent many hours both copying and writing books himself.

As monasteries such as Wearmouth and Jarrow, and others like them, grew up in England, the country round them was better tilled, the sheep and

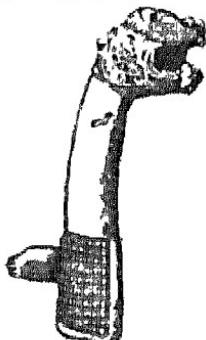
cows more carefully tended. Not only monks, but the sons of kings and nobles learnt to read and write and sing. More books were written and copied. Men learnt to know more about their bodies, how to keep them well and cure them if they were ill. They read more about countries they had never visited and things which happened long before they were born.

In some of the monasteries of those days, it was the custom to keep a chronicle or book in which a monk wrote down the most important things which happened in England year by year. Under the year 787 one of them wrote: "In this year first came three ships of Northmen out of Haerethaland. And then the reeve (king's officer) rode to the place, and would have driven them to the king's town, because he knew not who they were, and there they slew him. These were the first ships of Danish men which sought the land of the English nation."

The ships in which these strangers came to England were beautifully built of wood and driven through the sea by oars. At the prow was carved a dragon's head. They believed that this would



This is a picture of a monk writing or copying a book. Why? Notice the shape of his chair and his writing instruments and compare these with those on page 26



*Carved Port from the
Oseberg Ship, ninth
century.*

frighten away the gods and goddesses of their enemies, for they were heathen men who still believed in gods not unlike those in which the English once believed. They called themselves Vikings, which perhaps means warriors. Once, when some of them were asked where their chief was, they said: "We have no chief for we are all equal one to another."

The Vikings sailed the high seas in search of adventure. Some of their ships went to Iceland, some to the Faeroe Isles, some to Ireland, some to England, some to France, and some even to far-away Russia. It is said that some even went as far as the coasts of America.

When they were not exploring and plundering they ploughed and sowed their land, they sang songs and told tales of gods and heroes, they built their ships, and carved stone monuments with figures of animals and interlacing leaves.

But to the English their coming was terrible. Year after year the chronicle tells how the Viking army marched through the land, burning and plundering villages and churches. King Alfred of Wessex was driven to take refuge all one winter in the Isle of Athelney. When the spring came, messengers galloped from village to village with the glad tidings that the king was coming again. "Then", says the chronicle, "the men of Somerset and men of Hampshire and the men of Wiltshire were

III. DANI LAB



Why was the Danelaw so called? It is by any title and Strathclyde shaded differently from Wessex and Mercia?



*Part of a Cross from
Easby, H.R., eighth
century*

fain (glad) of their recovered King." They marched beneath his banner and defeated the Danish King Guthrum in battle. Alfred made a treaty which said that Guthrum should rule over the east of England while he ruled in the south and west, and Guthrum promised that he and his chief men would become Christians. So they came to be baptized, and Alfred was Guthrum's godfather, and made a great feast at Wedmore and gave his godson many splendid gifts.

The picture shows part of a cross found at Easby in Yorkshire. You can tell from the name of the place that it was a Viking settlement and the cross may have been carved by Viking craftsmen or by Englishmen taught by Vikings.



CHAPTER FIVE

THIEVES AND POLICEMEN IN ENGLAND IN THE DAYS OF THE ANGLES AND SAXONS

IF the people who live next door to you had gone away for a holiday and left their house shut up, and you saw a strange man trying to get in through one of the windows in the dusk, I wonder what you would do? I expect the best thing to do would be to call the nearest policeman. If there were no policeman about, it would be a good thing to run to the telephone box and ring up the police station. But in the days that you are now reading about there were no telephones. Since there were no trained policemen either, everyone had to help to catch thieves and wrong-doers.

Let us imagine that it is a hot day early in July somewhere about the year 1000 A.D. The village street looks quite deserted, except for a few cocks and hens scratching in the dung heaps near the wattle and daub cottages. The men and boys are busy in the meadow getting in the hay. It has been a wet June, so the hay harvest is late. Even the housewives have had to leave their cooking and spinning to help to rake the mown grass into cocks or "pikes".

Away on the heath, Wott, the cowherd, has fallen asleep in the shade of a gorse bush. The cows are swishing their tails to keep off the flies. Some of them are knee-deep in the bog-water. Suddenly out

from the shadow of the wood creeps a stealthy figure. He wears a shabby homespun tunic and hood, and his loose trousers are tied in round his thin legs with bands of straw. He carries a long hazel stick in his hand.

He looks all round from under his shaggy eyebrows. He hides behind the gorse bush and drops a small clod of earth near Wott's head to make sure that he is asleep. Then he creeps up to one of the cows and touches her smartly with his hazel wand. She kicks out lazily and then begins to move off in front of the stranger towards the wood. The stranger has got what he wanted, but he soon has more than he wanted, for the cow he has chosen is a leader and the others begin to follow her! Soon their soft blowings and snortings and the gentle thud of their feet rouse Wott. He yawns, sits up, and pushes his long tow-coloured hair out of his eyes. Why are the cows so much excited? He rubs his eyes and looks towards the wood. There, moving now very fast, he sees the stranger driving the cow, Daisy, before him. "Out, Out," he cries, and seizing the horn he wears at his belt he begins to blow.

The sound of the horn and of Wott's cries is carried by the soft summer air to the meadow. As they hear it Gurth and Edgar and Edith and Hilda and the others pause in their work. Someone says, "It is the hue and cry—it comes from the common." Edgar, who has been chosen alderman of the village for that year, begins to blow his horn. Picking up their scythes and rakes and knives, all the haymakers set off towards the common. There they find Wott

trying to look as though he has not been to sleep. He points the way and they run towards the wood. There is an old custom which says they must follow a thief to the boundary of their parish, but that is a long way. Some of them are stout and hot and soon sit down in the shade. Others turn back to the hay-field, when no one is looking. But the young boys are enjoying themselves; led by Edgar they rush shouting through the wood. Dry leaves and broken branches crack under their feet.

In the meantime the stranger has heard the cries of "Out, Out," and the sound of horns. He is frightened and forgets to drive Daisy. She turns round and trots slowly away and is never seen in the village again. The alderman and the boys come to a glade in the wood. On the far side of it, the stranger is just disappearing between the trees. He runs faster as he hears them come. Perhaps he will get away. But no! He catches his foot in the root of a tree and falls heavily to the ground. There he is sitting on the ground. He has hit his head and is dazed and giddy. In a moment they are on him.

If only he had Daisy still with him, an old custom allowed them to hang him on the nearest tree there and then. But now there is nothing to show that he tried to steal a cow. He and Wott will have to go before the court of the sheriff who rules the shire for the King. If the cow had not been worth more than fourpence, they could have gone to the district or "hundred" court which meets once a month. But Daisy is worth thirty pence, so they must wait for the shire court which is only held twice a year.

There is no prison to put the thief in. Edgar will have to keep him in his own cottage. He is dreadfully afraid that he may escape, so he collects the heaviest chains he can find and puts them on his ankles and wrists, and fastens one round his waist. He keeps him shut up day and night.

Days and weeks pass. It is nearly time to go to the sheriff's court. Wott is getting very frightened. He will have to stand up and say what the thief has done. There are special words he must use. If he makes a mistake the thief will be allowed to go free. Wott does not want the thief to go free. Every evening when he comes back with the cows he goes to the priest's cottage to say the words over to him. Every evening he makes the same mistake. The priest tries hard to help him to remember.

And now the day has come. Everyone is up very early. Edgar must go and take Wott and the thief with him. He must see that the thief is so heavily chained that he cannot escape on the way. Some of the other men of the village must go too, for they have their land on condition that they always go to the sheriff's court. The women were up before sunrise. They give the men cakes of rye bread, and slices of salt pork from the vats in the corner of the cottages. These the men put in the wallets they wear hanging from their girdles, for they will be away all day, and perhaps for several days. As soon as the sun is up they set out. As they pass through other villages more men join them. Some are going about thefts or other crimes, others must be at the court whenever it meets.

At last they come to the place where the court is held. It is a great oak tree, hundreds of years old, standing by itself in the middle of a common. Against the tree is a log of wood, and on it is sitting Waltheof, the sheriff. Beside him, holding a roll of parchment, is his clerk. He has an inkhorn hanging from his girdle and a pen made of a goose-quill stuck in his hat. On the other side of Waltheof is a priest with a shaven head. He has a bar of iron lying by him, a stick of wax and a large seal. He has kindled a fire of wood and dried leaves.

There are three other logs of wood, one on either side of the sheriff's log, and one just opposite him. The four of them make an open square. The men who always have to come to the court go and sit down upon these logs. They are all talking and making a great noise: by and by the clerk calls for order. He reads the names of all the people who should be present. A good many of them have not come, for there are no calendars or clocks in the villages and it is easy to make a mistake in the time or even in the day. But Waltheof says enough are there and the business can begin.

The first people to be called are a red-cheeked woman called Kyneburga and a frightened-looking man called Leofwin. They come and stand in the middle of the square, and Kyneburga tells how Leofwin left his ploughshare in the King's highway, and she, going out to draw water from the well before sunrise, fell over it and cut her leg, so that from the Feast of St. Michael last past until the Friday before the Feast of St. Nicholas she could not

put her foot to the ground. She gets all her difficult words and sentences quite right and says that Peaga and Godiva are here to speak for her. They, too, say their words correctly. Then Leofwin has to answer. He is very frightened, but he gets through his part safely too. Still no one knows whether Kyneburga has really spoken the truth about the matter. Either she or Leofwin will have to do something to prove who is right. The sheriff asks the men on the benches to say who shall make proof. They talk together for a few minutes. At last one of them, who acts as spokesman, says Leofwin shall make proof and he shall make it by ordeal by fire.

Poor Leofwin turns very white. The priest has put the bar of iron in the fire. He calls Leofwin and tells him to pick it up and carry it red hot for nine paces across the square. If he cannot carry it, everyone will think he is guilty. He picks it up, walks nine paces and drops it to the ground. The priest takes his burnt hand, binds it up and seals the bandage. He is told he must come back in three days. If his hand is healing he will be supposed not guilty, but if it is festering men will say that shows he is guilty, and he will have to pay a fine.

Now it is Wott's turn. He and the thief are led into the centre of the square. Wott tells his tale and this time he makes no mistake. The thief must answer. He is dizzy after the long tramp in his heavy chains. He cannot remember what he ought to say. He says a few words, stumbles and stops. There is a great shout. Everyone believes that he is proved guilty. Then Waltheof asks the men on

the benches what his punishment should be. They all begin talking at once. At last the leader gets up and says that he must pay 30d. to Daisy's owner.

And so all day the business goes on. Some men have to go to the ordeal, some break down and must pay the fine or even be hanged. The men on the benches say that some must go away and find six or even twelve friends to come back to the court with them, next time it meets. There they will have to raise their hands towards heaven and swear that their friend is such a good man that they are sure he would never do the thing of which he is accused.

Some of the prisoners, when they hear this, look very frightened, for they are not good men, and will find it hard to find twelve friends to swear for them. Men believed in those days that if they swore something untrue they might be killed by lightning or tossed by a bull or choked with the next piece of bread they ate.

The sun sets and still there are more cases to be tried. Waltheof, the sheriff, says they must meet again on the next day. Those whose cases have been tried may go home, but the men on the benches must come again for as many days as they are needed. They all begin grumbling for they want to get back to their work in the fields. The next day hardly any of them are there. Waltheof says there are not enough to make a court. The aldermen in charge of the prisoners who have not been tried must take them home again, and keep them safely chained for another six months.

CHAPTER SIX

THE NORMANS AND WHAT THEY DID FOR ENGLAND

YOU have read in chapter four how the Viking sea rovers sailed over the sea to Iceland and England and even perhaps as far as North America. Others made their homes in that part of France which we now call Normandy - the land of the Norsemen. Here was born the boy who afterwards became King William I of England. His father, Robert, was Duke, or leader, of all the Normans in Normandy. When his little son was only seven years old, Robert sailed away to the Crusades. Before he went he took William with him to a meeting of all the great men of the land. While the little boy sat solemnly in a chair the nobles, one by one, knelt before him. They placed their large hands between his little ones and promised to be faithful to him all the time his father was away.

Robert never came back, so that William became Duke of Normandy while he was still a child. He was hot tempered, but brave. He expected people to obey him, but he liked them to have good laws which they could understand, so that the country might be free from violent men. In this way merchants might travel with their goods from town to town without being robbed, and monks and priests and women need not be afraid to move about the land unarmed.

William's cousin, Edward the Confessor, was



These drawings of clothes were made by Matthew Paris in Norman times

King of England. When he was a boy the Danes had come again to England. They had driven Edward from his home and he had found safety in Normandy. There he learnt to love Norman and French ways. At length the Dane who had made himself King of England died, and Edward was able to go back to his own country. It seemed to him a wet and foggy island after the sun of France. He was shocked to see the churches ill-kept. They were built of wood and of roughly hewn stone. Often the roofs leaked and there was no glass in the windows. He found that many of the priests could hardly read, and that they did not understand the Latin words they used in the church services. The schools, which had been set up by people such as Abbot Benet Biscop, had disappeared. During the long years of fighting against the Norsemen, men had not had time or peace for learning. One of the places which had fallen into ruin was the Abbey church of St. Peter, called Westminster. It stood on Thorney Island, close to the King's own Palace on the banks of the Thames, not far from London.

King Edward invited Frenchmen and Normans to come over to England to help him to rebuild this church. He made another Frenchman, Robert of Jumièges, Bishop of London. Others came over to



This is a picture of King Edward the Confessor taken from a piece of embroidery—the Bayeux Tapestry made in France soon after the Conqueror past of England.

visit him from time to time. The great men of England were very angry about this. They did not like the Normans and Frenchmen with their tidy ways, and their careful manners at table. They thought it was just boastfulness that made them learn to read and write and understand the Latin services.

Edward had no children, and it is said that at one time he promised his cousin William that he should be King of England after him. But when he lay dying on Twelfth Night in the year 1066, just as his church of Westminster was being finished, he said that he hoped that the English Earl Harold would be chosen by Englishmen as their King.

Harold was fighting against a Danish army in the north of England when a wild-eyed messenger galloped up. He brought news that the ships of William the Norman were off the coast of Sussex. By a rapid march, Harold and his tited army reached the edge of a line of hills overlooking Hastings and the sea. Here, on October 14th, 1066, at the end of a day of battle, Harold lay dead. The English army had been put to flight.

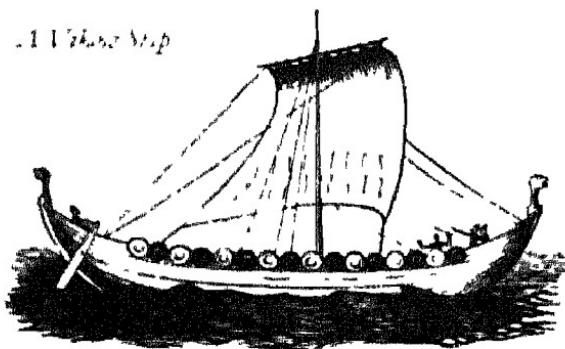
It was a November day three years later. The good folk who lived in the wattle and daub cottages, which clustered round the abbey we now call Peterborough Cathedral, heard the bell tolling from the monks' church. Brand, the abbot, was dead. Men began to wonder who the monks would choose to be their new abbot. The new King, William, did not mean them to choose anyone they liked. He knew that the monks of Peterborough were idle and ignorant,

and that the villages round, over which the abbot had been lord, were full of unuly men. He determined that this should stop. He sent a messenger riding to the monastery to say that he expected the monks to choose as abbot a French monk named Tutold.

Quickly the news spread from village to village. Angry groups of men would gather and gaze across the flat lands to where they could see the walls of the monastery on a little bit of rising ground above the marshes and waterways of the Fen. These villages belonged to the abbey. Their thanes, or lords, were the abbot's men. They vowed they would not have a Norman as their overlord. One after another they slipped away to the monastery of Fly. Most of the monks of Peterborough followed them.

There was a fleet of Danish pirate ships in the waters round Ely. It was either a thane or a monk who went to the pirate captain and promised to guide his ships through the water courses of the Fen to Peterborough. A few days later the villagers of Peterborough saw the long ships of the Danes

A Viking Ship



anchor in the river. The pirates swarmed out of their boats. It was not long before smoke and flames were rising from the monastery. The Danes were hurrying back to their ships carrying golden crosses, richly-bound service books, the abbot's cross and his embroidered robes and vestments.

A few days later the Norman, Turold, followed by one hundred and sixty knights, came riding along the road from the little town of Stamford, where he had been resting. When he got to Peterborough he found the monastery in ruins, the church plundered, and most of the monks gone. When King William heard what had happened he was very angry. He came with an army and besieged the thanes and monks in Ely. Probably none of them ever came back to their homes to tell the tale of what happened there, for in William's eyes they were traitors. Abbot Turold gave their villages to his French and Norman knights.

In the garden of one of the houses beneath the walls of Peterborough Cathedral is a high mound—almost a little hill. It is called Tout-hill or the Watch hill. No one knows how it was made or by whom, but it overlooks the direction in which the old Peterborough village (Medeshamstle) lay. It may be that the new abbot was afraid of the surly looks of his villagers, and that he bade his bailiff order them to come, day after day, to toil at throwing up this great mound. Perhaps he meant to put a little wooden watch tower on the top, and to set soldiers there to see that the villagers did not rise against him.

Peterborough and its villages were not the only places in England to which Norman abbots and Norman lords came in the years after the battle of Hastings. Many Englishmen died fighting against the King. William took their villages and gave them as a reward to the Frenchmen and Normans and Flemings who had helped him to conquer England. When an English bishop or abbot died, the King nearly always sent a Norman to take his place. Once more the monks had to keep the strict rules of the monastery. They must have good manners at meal times. They must not have rich coverlets on their beds. They must get up at midnight and go into the dim church to praise God. They must learn to sing the solemn chants that were used in the churches of France. Good scholars were put in charge of the schools. Boys learnt once more to understand the Latin services. One monk, called the almoner, was in charge of the old clothes of the monks and the broken bread which was left after meals. These he collected to give to the poor folk who called at the monastery gate.

By and by in the villages of England, great waggons drawn by oxen began to bring blocks of stone from the nearest quarries. The Norman lord of the village had sent for French masons or builders to repair or rebuild the church. We can tell which parts of our churches were built in the days of King William's sons and great-grandsons by the beautiful round arches over their doorways and windows. Great pillars standing on square bases carry the round arches of the nave. Perhaps we can picture

a little crowd of English children watching the deft Norman carvers as they shape the blocks of stone with an axe. This one is carving the head of a strange monster to act as a water-spout. This other is carving a kind of zig-zag pattern, or diamond-shaped lozenges on the stones which are to form the arch over the doorway.

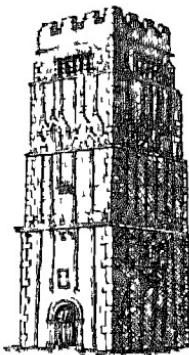
At first many of the new Norman lords made their villagers throw up mounds with deep ditches round them, and put up little wooden watch towers on them as a refuge against rebels. Many years later King William's great-grandson allowed some of his lords to build stone towers or "Keeps" upon these mounds. Perhaps near your home there may be the remains of one of these Norman castles. It may be a round tower or a square "Keep", with walls many feet thick. You can recognise it by its round-arched doors and windows and its zig-zag ornament.

By this time the English villagers had begun to use some French words mixed with their English talk. They spoke perhaps of the village instead of the tun.



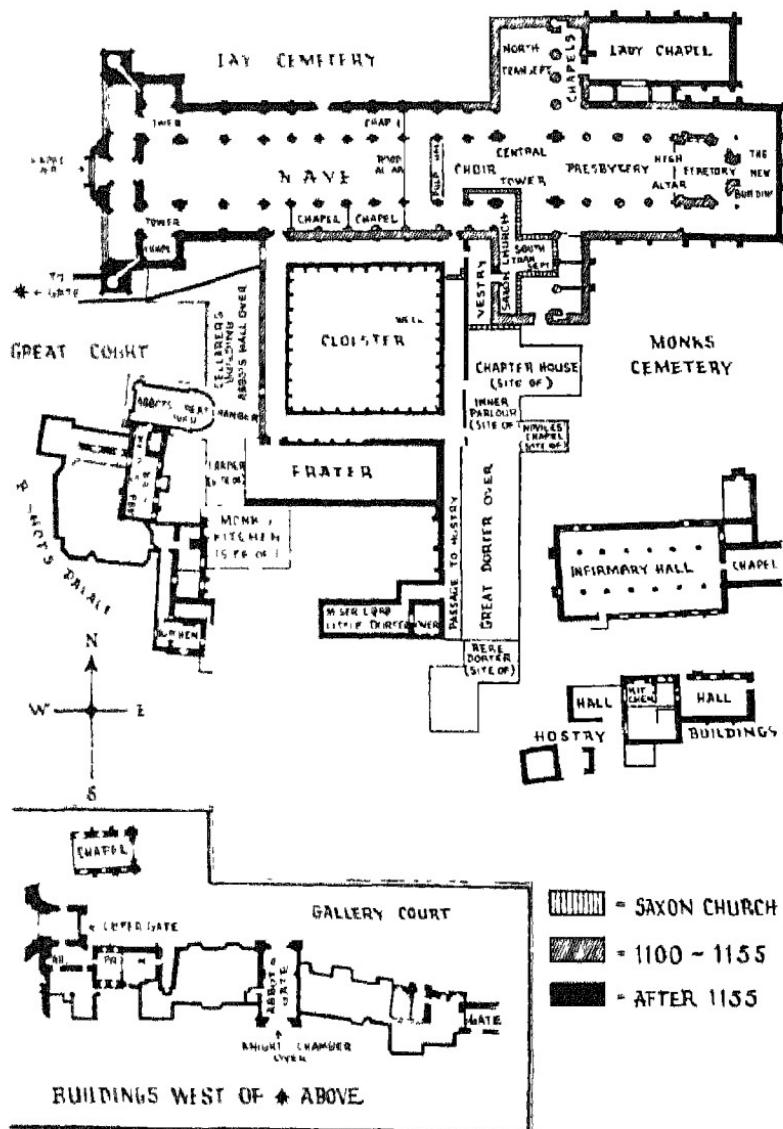
WOODEN CHURCH
AT GRILLSFIELD

These two churches were built just before the Norman Conquest. This is built of stone, though the plaster stripes which run up the face of the tower are made in imitation of wooden beams.



LIRLISBRIION
CHURCH
TOWER

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL



They still went to the Hundred or Shire court with their quarrels. If they were supposed to have done wrong, they might still have to prove their innocence by carrying red-hot iron in their hands; but now and again there was great excitement in the villages. News came that the king's own judges were travelling through the shires to see that all robbers or thieves were being caught and punished. If a man had a very bad character with his neighbours, even if he could carry his red-hot iron without getting a festered hand, the judges would order that he must leave the country as soon as the wind would carry him over the sea.

Here is a glossary telling you the meaning of the hard words in the plan:

Presbytery The eastern part of the church beyond the choir stalls.

Relatory The place where relics of saints were kept.

Cellarer The monk who had charge of the food provisions and wines and beer.

Chapter House The room where the monks met to settle the affairs of the monastery.

Dorter. The dormitory or bedroom

Frater. The dining-room or refectory

Hostry The building where guests were received.

Infirmary The building to which sick monks were sent

Lady Chapel The chapel built in honour of the Virgin Mary the Mother of Jesus

Misericord The building where monks, who needed it might have special food

Solar The parlour or sitting-room

CHAPTER SLVEN

VILLAGE LIFE WHEN HENRY III WAS KING

IN this chapter we shall need our magic carpet again. We will ask it to carry us back to the days when a little nine-year-old boy, Henry III, had just become King of England. It was the year 1216.

We will imagine that our carpet has put us down, on a fine February morning, on some high ground in one of the Midland counties of England. All round us stretches a great heath. The turf at our feet is short and springy. The gorse bushes show here and there a few early yellow flowers, smelling sweet and nutty. The hazel catkins dance in the breeze. Below us, a long way off, is a dark line of woodland, oak and beech, not yet in leaf. Beyond that a faint blue haze of smoke rises into the air. It is the wood smoke from the houses of a village on the far side of the wood.

Let us follow this cattle track which leads across the common. Here and there are stacks of turfs which have been cut into neat squares. Someone will come to fetch them by and by when they are quite dry, for they make good firing, and each villager is allowed to cut a certain number. Now we come in sight of the village cows. They are long-legged bony creatures, for they have had very little to eat during the winter. No one has thought yet of growing turnips or mangolds to feed them on,

ENGLISH LIFE FROM THE 4TH CENTURY TO THE 14TH CENTURY



A MONK AT HIS STUDIES



A ROMAN SOLDIER



A ROMANO-BRITISH
MAN AND BOY



A SAXON WARRIOR



AN ANGLO SAXON
DINNER PARTY



A NORMAN KNIGHT AND HIS LADY



COUNTRY PEOPLE
IN THE 13TH CENTURY



14TH CENTURY DRESS



A GAME OF CHESS IN THE 14TH CENTURY

and last summer's hay crop was a poor one. Here is the village cowherd. He has not fallen asleep as Wott did; he is busy cutting a reed, to make a pipe on which he can play tunes and while away the long hours before he takes the cattle back to the village.

Now we are on the verge of the wood. It looks dark and mysterious, and we can hear crunchings and snortings and the crackle of dead leaves. What can it be? Why, it is a great herd of pigs. In the autumn they fed in the wood on acorns and beech masts. But now they have only the poor grass just outside. This bare-legged boy, dressed in a home-spun reddish-brown tunic must be the swineherd. If we ask him to whom the pigs belong, he will tell us that forty of them belong to his lord, and the rest to the villagers, but that the villagers must pay one pig to the lord for every ten they feed in the wood or on the common.

A little further on there is a sound of chopping. It is the hayward who looks after the village fences. He is cutting down trees to mend the fence round the village meadow, and to make hurdles for the sheepfolds. Now we see the sunlight filtering through the branches at the edge of the wood. A few more steps and our path comes into the open again. We are standing on the edge of a great field which covers perhaps as many as 500 or 700 acres.

We can see five or six ploughs at work in different parts of the field. Let us look at this one near us. Instead of being made of iron or steel as ploughs are to-day, it is a clumsy thing made almost entirely



of wood. Only the share and the coulter, or blade, are of iron. It is not drawn by a tractor or even by horses. Four or perhaps even eight oxen are yoked to it, and while a man guides the plough, a boy with a goad runs beside the oxen to keep them moving. At the end of every two hundred and twenty yards the ploughman stops to rest his oxen. He calls this a furrow long, or fur-long.

It is time to begin again. The boy guides the oxen at right angles to the furrow which has just been ploughed, and then turns them at right angles again. The man lowers the coulter and the share begins to cut another furrow parallel to the first one. By dinner time they should have ploughed a piece of land about two hundred and twenty yards long by about twenty-two yards wide. That is what we should call an acre. Now the ploughman un-yokes and hobbles the oxen, and sits down with the other men and boys at the side of the field. Out of the bags which they wear hanging from their girdles, they draw slices of bacon and flat round cakes of bread which they have brought for their dinner.

Supposing we join them and ask whose land this is. They will tell us that it is the village land. Each family has its share in it—not lying all together but

scattered about in half-acre strips in different parts. "Then whose are the oxen with which you are ploughing?" we may ask.

"Why, each family must supply two oxen for the ploughs, of course," they will reply. "This evening when we have finished work we shall each lead our own oxen on to the fallow, or unploughed, field for the night," and they will point to another great field about the same size as the one that is being ploughed. It is unploughed—or fallow—and weeds and grass are showing amidst the stubble of last year's crop.

"Why have you not ploughed it?" we ask

"It was sown last year with barley, so this year it must rest; the oxen we use in ploughing and the other beasts we want close at hand, are allowed to graze on it until we plough it in the autumn."

"Do you only sow one field each year?" we shall say.

"Oh, no," they answer, "the field which was resting last year was ploughed and sown with winter wheat last autumn, see where the young corn is already showing."

Sure enough there is a great field, already shimmering with the emerald green of springing wheat. That, too, they tell us is shared among the whole village, each family having about twenty scattered strips in it as in the field now under the ploughs.

When the men have finished their dinner, we will leave them re-yoking the oxen, and follow the grassy road which leads across the field to the village. The cottages stand along the village street. They

are built of wood or beaten mud, thatched with reeds or straw. They still have no chimneys—only a hole in the roof through which partly escapes the smoke from the wood-and-turf fire burning on the hearth-stone beneath. There is no glass in the windows; a lattice work or horn shutter must be put up to keep out the wind and the rain.

There is only one room in the house. It is dark and the wood smoke which has not escaped makes our eyes smart if we step inside. As we get used to the dim light we shall see that there is not much furniture, perhaps a wooden table, a few three-legged stools, one chest to keep clothes in, another for corn, and a third for the bedding—straw-filled mattresses, logs for pillows, and coarsely woven blankets. A ham is hanging from the rafters, bows and arrows, a pitchfork and a distaff are the only ornaments on the mud-plastered walls. The floor is of beaten earth strewn with rushes. The weaving loom, on which the mistress of the house weaves all



Note the dress of the people and the instruments they are using to cut the corn. It must be very sharp now. Notice his ham. What would he use it for?

the cloth for the family clothes, as well as blankets for the beds, stands in one corner.

Let us leave the cottage again and walk on down the village street. Here is the stone-built church. It has round-arched doorways and windows, so we know it was built at least fifty years before in Norman times. The churches men are building in 1216 have pointed arches and new fashions in ornament. Here comes the priest. We know him because the crown of his head is shaven and he wears a black gown down to his ankles. He has been teaching Latin and psalm-singing to a few of the cleverest boys of the village. They hope to be priests themselves when they grow up, but they will have to pay money to the lord of the manor if they do this instead of working in the fields. This afternoon the priest will go to help with the ploughing, for he, too, has strips of land in the common fields. He was up at sunrise this morning. After he had said Mass in church, he went to visit some sick folk in the village.

Now we come to a large house. It is built of wood, and it has some fields of its own round it, and in the garden it has a dovecot. This shows us that it belongs to the lord of the manor, for only he may keep doves.

Now the road dips steeply by a river which marks the village boundary. Along the banks are grassy meadows. Sheep and cattle have fed here all the autumn and winter, but soon the hayward will put up a fence to keep out beasts and let the hay grow. Each villager will be allowed the hay from about

two acres of meadow. Here is the lord's water-mill. All the villagers must have their corn ground by the lord's miller. He will keep some of the flour as payment.

If we stay in the village all night we shall be wakened at sunrise by the sound of shuffling feet. The men from the cottages are on their way to the hall. It is one of the days when they must work for the lord of the village instead of for themselves. They are going to hear from the lord's bailiff what work they are to do that day. Perhaps Alan and Roger are told to plough the lord's close, John and Robert are to clean the ditches which run down to the mill stream. They will grumble at this, for it is a dirty job. But they are not free to choose. As long as they do as they are told, they cannot be turned out of their cottages and their strips in the fields, but if they refused to work they would be cruelly punished.

The day will seem long to John and Robert, but at length the sun sets, and with aching backs and muddy tunics, they go home. As they go they begin to sing, for the next day is the Feast of St. Valentine. It is a holy day or holiday. The villagers will go early to church to hear Mass, but after that, apart from milking the cows and seeing that the pigs and sheep and poultry are fed, they can amuse themselves.

Some wandering players have come to the village. There is a bearward with a performing bear, and a man who can balance a sword on the end of his nose, and there is also a pedlar with a pack full of laces and ribbons and needles and spices. They will be on the

village green all day; and when the good folk are tired of dancing and wrestling they will squat on the grass and watch their tricks and bargain for the pedlar's wares, for there are no shops in the village.

The next day the pedlar is starting his journey again. He is going to Norfolk and perhaps he will take us with him. None of the villagers can come with us, for if they leave their home they have to pay a heavy fine to the lord. We shall have to walk for a week or ten days, stopping to sell the pedlar's wares in towns and villages, and sleeping in the guest house of a monastery or in the one big bedroom of an inn.

When we come at last to the end of our journey, this Norfolk village looks at first sight very like the place in the Midlands from which we set out. Here is the heath, and beyond the heath the woodland, and round the village the ploughlands, though they are not so large as those we have left. But look at the first field! On some parts of it people are ploughing, but on other parts the wheat is already springing, and here and there a hurdle fence has been put up and a flock of sheep is grazing on a patch of stubble. The same thing seems to be true of the other fields too. Let us speak to this man who is leaning over the hurdles looking at the sheep.

"Good morning, whose sheep are these?"

"They are mine."

"Why have you folded them on the ploughed field?"

"This is my own holding. I do what I please with it. I have ploughed my land in the west field,

and the rest of my strips in this field are already growing wheat. These strips must be fallow this year."

"But are you not all obliged to do the same thing with your strips?"

"No, why should we? We do as we think fit."

"But what does the lord of the manor say?"

"We have no lord here. Adam de Valoignes and the monks of Binham have a manor, but we village folk make our own arrangements in our village court about ploughing and sowing and reaping."

"Don't you have to work for the lord then?"

"Why yes, my land belongs to the monks' manor and I must plough or sow or reap for them two days a week, and pay two hens and ten eggs at the Feast of St. Andrew."

"How much land have you?"

"I have twelve acres."

"Is that enough for you to live upon? In the village I left a few days ago the villagers had about thirty acres each."

"Well, we find twelve acres each plenty here."

If we bid him good-day and pass on to the village street, or "gate" as it is called, we shall probably find it looking much like the street in the Midland village. Perhaps the houses will be built of grey-hued flints, or of the reddish-brown carstone which is found in parts of Norfolk, but they will be much the same in size, and without chimneys or glass windows. There will be no lord's house, because no lord lives in this village. There may, instead, be a great barn in which the bailiff of the monks of

Binham stores all the corn from the monks' stips, as well as the eggs and poultry the villagers pay as rent.

So you see that if you live in an East Anglian village you must picture it differently in the thirteenth century from your cousin's village in Bedfordshire. If you live in Kent, or in Wales, or Scotland, you would have to make a different picture again. We have no space in this chapter to find out what these must have looked like. Perhaps you can find out about them for yourselves.



A STONEMASON

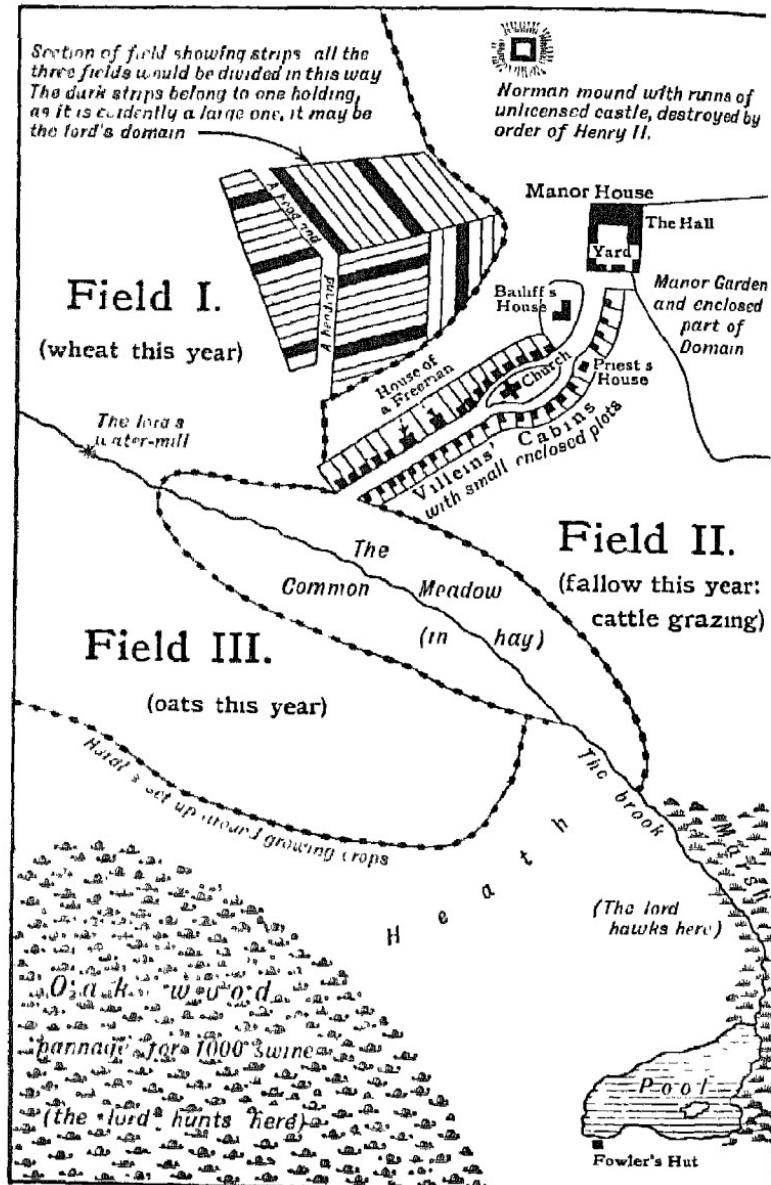


A COBBLER

Figures of village craftsmen have been carved in the village church

On the opposite page is a plan of a Midland village or manor. Find each kind of land mentioned in the chapter. Find the mill, the manor house, the church, the houses of the peasants. The black strips in the fields all belong to the lord.

PLAN OF A MEDIEVAL MANOR



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EARLY DAYS OF OUR TOWNS

YOU have read in chapter 1, of how much history we can learn by keeping our eyes open and using our commonsense. This is as true in towns as it is in the country, so let us see to-day what are some of the things which town children may be able to discover about what towns looked like, and what their citizens did, in the days of King John and of Henry III, or perhaps Edward III and Richard II.

Let us look first at the market place. It is generally an open space between shops, is it not?—square or oblong, and much wider than an ordinary street. Quite often four main streets meet in it, so that it is really a sort of cross roads. It is perhaps the very earliest place in the town at which things were bought and sold, for people from four different directions could meet there to exchange flour and butter and eggs for knives and bows and arrows, or a sack of sheep's wool for a bale of fine cloth.

In days when men were wild and lawless, or in times of invasion by Norsemen and Danes, unarmed traders might be robbed and murdered by bands of soldiers, so they liked to buy and sell round a stone or wooden cross, for they felt that the most lawless men would respect a cross. In some market places ancient stone crosses are still standing. Most of the crosses are not themselves as old as the earliest days of the market, but have taken the place of still older ones.

The cross generally stands upon a flight of steps, and it was on the steps that the traders set out their wares before the days of market stalls. But it was cold, damp work standing on the steps in autumn rains, and sometimes, in the days of King Edward I or King Edward III, the townsfolk built a stone roof over their market cross just as people to-day put up awnings over their stalls. Some of these roofed crosses are still standing, as at Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire.

It was not only by road that traders brought goods for sale. A good many of them came by boat. Thus some towns have grown up where a road crosses a river, as at Cambridge where a bridge was built for the road, or at Oxford where people could wade across the shallow water of the ford. If the town grew up near enough to the sea for boats to bring goods from other countries, the townsfolk



A market cross

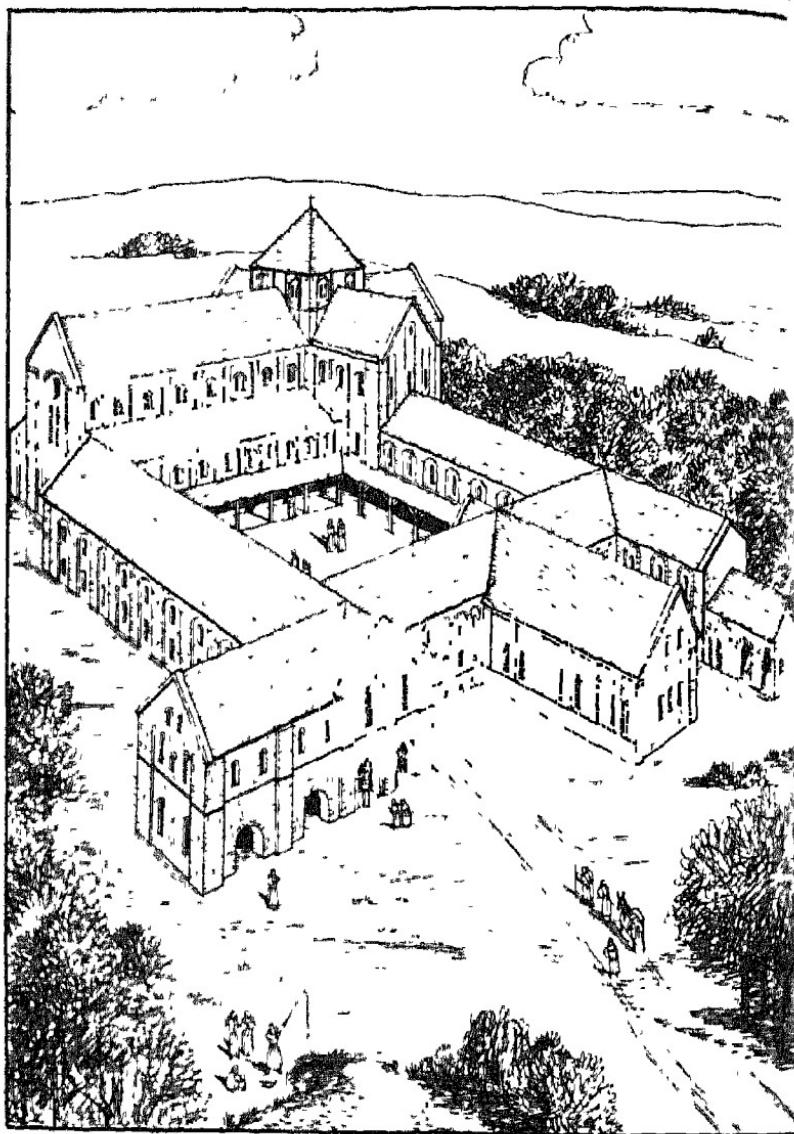


would soon grow rich, for the merchants from overseas would need beds and food, and these they would have to pay for. Often the king would allow the town to take heavy tolls from these strangers for the right of landing and selling their wares.

In some of our towns to-day there is a great abbey church or cathedral. Long ago, perhaps in the reign of William the Conqueror, or Henry II, or even in Saxon days, the king or some other great man gave the little village, where these towns now stand, to some monks. They built themselves a monastery to live and work in, with a dining-room and a dormitory or sleeping-room, granaries and storerooms, and a cloister or quadrangle where the monks sat to read and write, and above all a great church in which by day and by night they might worship God. In some places nearly all these buildings have now disappeared, but the church remains and has become the cathedral we know.

In the old days when the monks first came, the village or country town was much smaller than now. But the abbot or father of the monastery was a busy man. He needed stewards and bailiffs to look after his lands, and knights and squires to do the fighting service which the king expected even from monks who owned land. All these people had to have houses to live in, and they were too busy fighting or keeping accounts and collecting rents of coin and eggs, to till any land or make any clothes for themselves. Thus, little by little, merchants and craftsmen came to join the peasants who already lived round the abbey. The merchants bought wax and parchment,

KIRKSTILL ABBEY



wine and gold, and silver candlesticks, and other things needed for the church and sold them to the monks. The craftsmen made armour and swords, caps and cloaks, and leather shoes, and sold them to the knights and squires, and so a town grew up around the monastery.

Some of you may know in your town to-day a high grassy mound surrounded by a dry ditch many feet deep. Perhaps nothing now stands on the mound. Perhaps, on the other hand, there are the remains of a stone building, or there may even be a square keep or a round one—a castle built by one of the Norman kings or barons, from which he could keep the countryside in order. Like the monks, the constable or baron who kept the castle was too busy to till fields and make clothes and armour for himself and his soldiers. Thus, again, a town grew up round the castle.

So you see there are many things which may have caused traders to come first to the place where you live. Try to discover which of those you have read about are true of your town.

As the merchants who lived in the towns became richer, there was more danger from robbers and evil men. Some towns had already grown up in safe places, where the Danes or the English had thrown up great turf walls in the days of the Danish wars. Some even, such as Chester and York and Lincoln, were protected by walls which the Romans built, which still stand to-day. Those which had no such protection began to build walls of turf or stone with strong gate towers and heavy wooden gates in each wall. King Edward I made a law that in every town

that had a wall and gates, the gates must be shut at sunset every evening and not opened again until sunrise. By the same law he commanded that six men must keep watch at each gate every night from Ascension Day until Michaelmas. It was to be their duty to arrest and imprison until morning, every stranger they met. These men were not trained and paid policemen. Each street, or group of streets, had to choose one of its inhabitants every year to act as one of the watchmen. I expect some of them would be frightened, and would turn their backs or hide in some deep shadow when they heard footsteps. Others probably felt very important, and made themselves a great nuisance by arresting people as strangers when they knew perfectly well that they were respectable citizens and lived in a neighbouring street. But perhaps, after all, most law-abiding people in those days stayed in their own houses after sunset. There were no lights in the streets and the roads were badly made, full of holes and puddles and heaps of rubbish which people had thrown out of their houses. Perhaps, too, some of the dogs and pigs which roamed about in the rubbish during the day had not been shut in. It would not be very nice to fall over one of these in the dark. I do not think you are likely to find pigs feeding in the gutters of your town to day, but you may be able to trace some at least of the gates, and perhaps bits of the walls are still standing. They may be easily found, or they may be hidden behind shops, and in backyards and gardens. In any case they will show you the boundaries of your town when the walls were first built.

As the merchants began to grow richer than their neighbours the craftsmen, they clubbed together to buy from the king the right to have a Merchant Gild. This meant that they might meet together once or twice a year to make rules about trading in the town. The gild put itself under the protection of a saint, perhaps St Thomas or St. Nicholas or the Holy Trinity. On the Name Day of the saint all the members put on their best clothes and went in procession to the parish church to hear mass. Afterwards they met in the Gild Hall. The chief merchant, or alderman of the Gild, sat at the head of the room and the others sat round it. They made rules to say that every stranger who came to the town with fish or cloth, or "marmosets or apes or popinjays (parrots)" or other goods, must give to the members of the Merchant Gild the first choice from his wares. No one must go outside the town to meet the market people coming in on market day and buy, say, twenty-four eggs for a penny, and then sell in the town only twenty for a penny. No one must buy up all the supplies of any one thing, such as wheat or oysters or butter, and sell again at a price far above what he had paid.

Sometimes when the rules had been read and offenders fined, someone would tell a sad story about a merchant whose ships had been shipwrecked or plundered by pirates, or of another who had died while he was still young and poor, leaving sons to be apprenticed, or daughters to be married. Then the merchants would take out of the strong-box, in which they kept their money, enough to replace the

ships of the one merchant, to apprentice the sons of the other, and to give a dowry, that is a little money, to the girl who was going to be married. In the meantime the merchants' wives were busy in the kitchen of the Gild Hall preparing a feast for the men and their guests.



A medieval kitchen.

At a later time the merchants would perhaps ask the king to make their town into a borough. Then they could have the right to choose each year a mayor and a council of brethren. They would have power to hold a kind of police court, to try people who had left their rubbish in the streets or allowed a drain or ditch to get choked so that it flooded other peoples' houses. They could fine people who cheated by putting false bottoms in their pint pots so that a man who had paid for a pint only got three-quarters. They could punish those who sold loaves which were under weight, or rolls of cloth with thin places hidden inside.

They were allowed, too, to take tolls or payments from people coming into the town with goods for sale. They could make people pay for putting up a stall in the market place or even arranging goods on the ground. They would discuss how to spend the

money from these fines and tolls. Perhaps they would decide to repair the walls, or to pave the market place with cobble stones, or to make a channel of fresh water to run down the main street.

The mayor and his brethren were generally the merchants who belonged to the Merchant Gild. If you have an ancient Gild Hall in your town, it may once have been the meeting place of the Merchant Gild, and also of the mayor and his brethren. Perhaps you will be able to discover in your parish church, tombs or brass slabs placed in remembrance of some of the rich merchants of old who served the town so well. Sometimes at the end of a side aisle of the church you may find a chapel, or, possibly, two openings like little cupboards in the walls—there may be an altar there now; if not, there probably was one in days gone by. Try to find out whether it was the one at which the merchants worshipped God on their Feast Day.

After a time the craftsmen—drapers and mercers, weavers, bakers and cordwainers—began to form gilds too. Like the merchants they made rules for their trades. They said no one must work at night because he would do bad work, and be unfair to his neighbours. They said how many apprentice boys each masterman might have, and what width a weaver should make his cloth. They chose wardens from among their members to see that the rules were kept. So that the wardens' work might be easier, all the people of one trade often lived in the same street. Pie Corner or Cooks' Row is the place

where the pastry cooks lived. Saddlergate—gate here means street—is the street where the leather-workers and saddle-makers had their shops. You should look for old street names of this kind.

Like the merchants, the craftsmen had common chests to help their poorer members, and they, too, had their feast days. Sometimes all the craftsmen joined together for a great Festival. Then they would act a play, perhaps written by the parish priest. It told some story from the Bible—such as the story of Abraham and Isaac or Noah's Ark. Each craft would play one scene. For weeks beforehand they were busy making properties and learning their parts. They used carts for stages, and moved from one street corner to another in turn so that each part of the town might see the whole play.

There are other street names in some of our towns which may remind us of old days. Such are Grey Friars or the Minories, Black Friars—and sometimes White Friars. We can be pretty sure that somewhere in Grey Friars or the Minories there lived, in the days of Henry III or Edward I, some of the Little Brothers—Brothers Minor—of St. Francis. At first, at any rate, they would have neither church nor house of their own. Perhaps some rich man would lend them an old house he did not want. They would spend much of their time visiting the sick and the poor, listening to tales of their troubles and their sins, and helping them with their work. They would sometimes get leave from the parish priest to preach on Sunday. Their sermons were simple and interesting—about not cheating in trade or not spoiling your

children, or not letting yourself feel bored. They told interesting stories to explain what they meant. Later, as we shall see, they forgot that St. Francis had taught them to be poor as Jesus Christ was poor, and they began to build handsome houses and churches for themselves. Perhaps you will find some remains of these, but it is worth remembering the days when they were simple and humble.

Beyond the old walls of your town you may find the remains of one or more hospitals. Some of these were founded to take care of lepers or old people, while others gave shelter to pilgrims going to the shrine of a saint to get their diseases cured or their sins forgiven, or to give thanks to God for safe return from a dangerous journey. Beyond these,



This is a picture of people acting a miracle play. Their stage is mounted on a wagon and can be moved from one street corner to another.

again, were the fields where the citizens grazed their cattle and sheep. Sometimes they even grew corn. Here they came early on May morning and other holidays to gather flowers and green boughs to deck the Maypole and wreath the doors of their houses.

The Guild of the Water Drawers of the Dee in Chester acted the story of Noah's Ark which you can find in the Bible (Genesis, chapters 6 to 8). Perhaps you could write and act such a play, telling how God's angel was sent to tell Noah that because of the wickedness of the world there would be a great flood, and that Noah was to build an ark or covered ship, in which to save himself, his wife, his three sons—Shem, Ham and Japheth—and their wives, and two of every kind of bird and beast. In the Chester play each of the sons says what he will do to help, but when the building is done Noah's wife says she won't go without her friends, and the sons have to drag her in.

Characters: Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, the four wives and two each of as many birds and animals as you have players.

Scene I: The Angel tells Noah what God is going to do; Noah says he will obey.

Scene II: Noah asks his sons what each will do to help.

Scene III: The Ark is finished. The animals and birds come in procession; the sons' wives discuss them. Mistress Noah says she will not go without her gossips.

Scene IV: The Ark grounds on the top of a mountain. Noah says he will send out a dove to see whether it has stopped raining. All wonder whether she will return. She comes with a leaf in her beak. They exclaim that the tops of the trees must be showing.

Scene V: They have sent out the dove a second time but she has not returned so they think it is safe to go. The Angel promises that God will not drown the whole earth again. The rainbow is the pledge of God's promise.



CHAPTER NINE

DISCONTENTS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

TO-DAY we must come back to the villages and towns which we visited in chapters seven and eight. More than a hundred years have passed by, and we are now in the reign of Richard II. The men and women in this chapter will be the great-great-grandchildren of boys and girls who worked and played in the streets and fields in the days of Henry III and Edward I.

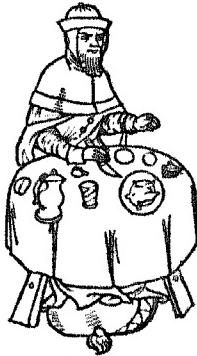
Let us first of all call in the village. It looks very much as it did in chapter seven, except that a little of the land which was once heath has been turned into fields. There are fences round these fields, and cottages in the midst of them. The Lord of the Manor must have allowed some of the villagers to plough up part of the common to make fields for themselves away from the common fields and meadows.

It is early on a Sunday morning ; men, women and children are coming out from hearing mass in the village church. But who is this standing on the steps of the stone cross ? He looks like a priest, for he wears a black gown and has the crown of his head shaven, but he is certainly not the vicar. The villagers gather round to see what he wants, and he begins to speak. "Ah! good people," he says, "matters go not well in England, and will not till we have all things common, and that there be no

peasants and no gentlemen, but that we all may be equal. The lords are clothed in velvet and silk, trimmed with fur, and we in poor cloth; they have wines and spices and good bread, and we have the rye, the bran and the straw, and drink water; they dwell in fair houses, and we have pain and labour, rain and wind in the fields Let us go to the king, he is young and show him how we will have things altered."

The men and women in the crowd mutter "Aye, aye, he speaks truth," and by and by when he has finished, one of the villagers—let us call him Alan—invites him to dinner. Alan's cottage is as poor as those of a hundred years before. His wife, Marjory, brings a stew of bacon and beans from the fire and pours it into wooden bowls. Her daughters, Alice and Joan, draw the wooden stools up to the trestle table. John, a boy of twelve, comes in from feeding the oxen. The priest says grace in Latin, and they all sit down.

The priest has a round weather-beaten face and twinkling eyes. He is so kind that the family begin to tell him their troubles. Alan has heard that the lord of the next village is letting his peasants pay money instead of doing work for him each week. This gives them more time to look after their own lands, and so they have more corn and butter and eggs to take to the market in the neighbouring town. He has asked the lord's bailiff to do



A rich man.



the same for him but he has refused. Alice wants to get married, but her lover lives six miles away and is bondman to a different lord. If she does marry him, her father will have to pay his lord 6s. 8d. Alan says he cannot afford this, for last year his eldest son, Robin, went away to school to learn to be a priest, and the lord made him pay for that.

The visitor asks why Robin could not stay in the village and learn from the vicar. All the family laugh at that and say the vicar is so ignorant, he does not understand the Latin services himself. Moreover, he keeps leaving the village. Sometimes he says he is going to Oxford to get more learning. Sometimes he tells them he is so poor that he must go to London where he can earn money, saying masses in St. Paul's Cathedral.

When the laughter has died down, Marjory grumbles because she has to pay two hens and ten eggs to the lord at Easter. If she might keep them to sell in the market she would have money to give her family meat and fish and good ale for dinner sometimes, instead of having to live on bacon and the weak penny ale which is all the ale-wife will sell to poor women like her.

John says when he is a little older he means to run away from the village. He has heard that many lords have let their bondmen pay money instead of doing work for their land. They use the money, he hears, to hire free men to work for them. "They pay good wages too," he says, "perhaps as much as 10s. a year to an oxherd, for labourers are hard to get and can ask what they will."

"They say there is a law," says Alan, "that no lord is to pay more to his labourers than was paid before the great sickness (the Black Death) of which so many died when I was a child. An oxherd got 6s. 8d. a year then."

"That is so," says the priest, "but John is quite right. The lords need so many men that they pay them as much as they ask, in spite of the law."

"Well, we are miserable enough," says John. "If anyone is going to the King to ask him to mend matters, I'll go too."

Alan and Marjory laugh and tell him to put such wild notions out of his head. But the priest says "Nay, let the boy come. John Ball, the good priest of Kent, and Jack Straw and others are going up and down the country. When they have made all things ready, a secret sign will be sent round the

villages—and the towns too. Then we shall set out for London, to find the King."

Alice is surprised that towns-folk should have anything to make them unhappy: but the priest tells her that poor folk everywhere are miserable. In the towns the master craftsmen grow rich. They are afraid that if workmen and apprentices



Reaping corn.



Mowing hay.

become masters, they will take away some of their trade. So the gilds have made new rules. These say that a workman must pay a great deal of money and buy himself a rich suit of livery before he can become a master. So it has come about that many a poor boy knows that he will have to be a workman all his days. In his grandfather's time he would have been sure of becoming a master one day if he worked well and learnt his trade. The master-craftsmen, too, are afraid of their workmen having gilds of their own, lest they should agree together to refuse to work except for higher wages. If they think the men have formed a gild, they complain to the mayor of the town. Then the mayor calls them before the town court, or leet. If he finds that they have formed a gild and have not spent money on getting leave from the king, he makes them pay a heavy fine.



This picture shows peasants coming to a manor house to be told by the steward what work they must do for the lord of the manor.

The king's grandfather invited skilled weavers from Flanders to come over to England with their workmen and apprentices. He said they were better weavers than Englishmen.

Perhaps they were, but Englishmen thought they could have learnt to weave better if anyone had taught them, and that these aliens (as the priest calls them) were taking work which English men and boys, and women too, might have had. They did not understand that there might be enough work for everybody if things were wisely arranged.

"So you see, my dear," the priest says to Alice, "the townsfolk have their troubles too, and will join us. Perhaps even the poor folk of London—apprentice boys and poor workmen and beggars—will help us when we get to the city."

Perhaps the next day this wandering priest will come to a small town. While he is standing in the market place, two fashionably dressed men pass him. They are wearing tight-fitting coats of gaily coloured silk which reach half-way down to their knees. On their long tight sleeves are numbers of shining buttons, and round the waist they wear copper and enamel belts. They have long silk stockings and soft red leather shoes with long



Sheep-shearing.

points. Each wears a dagger and a gilded leather wallet hanging from his belt. Perhaps we may call them Ralf Carbonel and William Lewin. As they pass the corner where the priest is standing, Ralf says in a weary voice, "I don't know what is coming to the world. My serving man tries to wear clothes like mine. I can get him fined if I catch him paying more than 12d. an ell for his cloth." "Yes," replies William, "and



Killing a pig in the fourteenth century.

it is not only the serving men; common women, too, are dressing like noble dames and damsels, instead of wearing coarse stuff so that all may know of what rank they are."

Just at that moment a poor beggar comes out from a narrow passage between two houses. He is lame, and his long thin tunic is torn and patched. He holds out his dirty cap for a gift from Ralf or William, but they draw away lest he should make them dirty. Our priest has only two silver pennies left in his own wallet but he pulls one out and hands it to the beggar. Then he goes and stands by the market cross and speaks much as he spoke in the

village. He says, too, that abbots and monks have grown rich and forgotten the service of God and His poor. Instead of tilling their lands and giving alms and praising God in church, they ride out hunting in furred gowns. They are not content now to eat bean soup and fish. They must have roast swan and cheese and cherries and other dainties.



Bringing corn to a mill in the fourteenth century.

Autumn passed into winter. In March the poor folk were told that everyone over fifteen, in every town or village, must pay a tax to help to pay for a great war which the English had been waging for years against the French. The poor folk became more miserable than ever. At last, in the early days of June, in the year 1381, John Ball's message began to spread from village to village, from town to town, in Kent and Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge and Bedfordshire. Men and boys seized their bows and arrows, their pitch-forks and their knives. The march on London had begun. On the way,

gentlemen's houses were burnt down and some people, who had been specially hard upon their poor neighbours, were killed. But for the most part what the people wished was to find the young King, Richard. They were sure they could persuade him to give them what they wanted. Above all they meant to ask him to make a law saying they might pay their lords a rent of 4d. an acre for their land and not have to work for them any more.

Perhaps you have read the story of how they found the King, how their leader was killed, and how the King promised to help them, but afterwards was prevented by his uncle and the other great lords who governed for him. You may remember that John Ball was put to death because he would not say that what he had taught was wrong.

Thus you see the peasants did not get their way by burning houses and murdering great men. As time passed, however, more and more of them were set free by their lords, until at last no villeins or un-free men were left in English villages. At length, too, the gilds which had made harsh rules in the towns came to an end.



CHAPTER TEN

CLOTH WEAVERS AND MERCHANTS

IT was an April day towards the end of the reign of King Richard II. A citizen of London, called Geoffrey Chaucer, came riding over London Bridge towards the Tabard Inn at Southwark. He was tired of the long dark winter. London streets had been thick with mud, and bitter winds had howled round the shuttered windows at night. He knew that flowers were opening in the hedgerows and on the heaths beyond the city walls, and that larks and blackbirds and thrushes were singing in the meadows. He wanted to get away from shops and markets. He had determined to go upon a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket in Canterbury.

That same evening the Tabard Inn was busy. At least twenty-nine other guests arrived. The inn-keeper welcomed them all. Their horses were unsaddled and fed in the great stables. The travellers found a cheerful fire and good food prepared for them in the large guest room of the inn. Chaucer liked talking to people. He had soon made friends with all the guests. He discovered that everyone of them was going to Canterbury. He tells us that there were amongst them a knight and his young son, a merchant in a beaver hat, a friar with twinkling eyes, a prioress who had most beautiful manners and could speak a little French. There was also a "good wife" from Bath. She was fair-haired and rosy-cheeked and jolly. She seemed always ready for



ENGLISH LIFE FROM THE 14TH CENTURY TO THE 20TH CENTURY



A PILGRIM AT AN ALE-STAKE



MONKS AND A FRIAR



AN ELIZABETHAN
SEAMAN



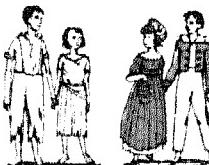
THOMAS COKE



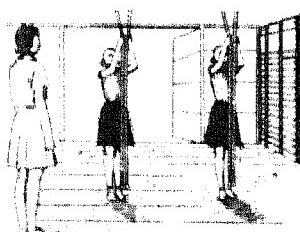
A 17TH CENTURY SQUIRE



A 17TH CENTURY SHOPPER



FACTORY CHILDREN AND RICH CHILDREN



A MODERN GYMNASIUM



MID 19TH CENTURY DRESS



EARLY 19TH CENTURY
DRESS

a joke. Perhaps Chaucer himself helped her from her horse, for he noticed how easily she sat upon it. He saw, too, that she had wrapped a mantle round her hips and that she had a pair of sharp spurs at the heels of her soft new leather shoes. She wore scarlet stockings and, under her very broad-brimmed hat, her head and throat were wrapped in a beautiful clean white cloth. Altogether she looked as though she must be able to spend a good deal of money upon her clothes and upon the ambling horse she rode.

She was indeed a rich woman. She had made her money by weaving, which she did so well that her cloth was even better than the best cloth made by the Flemish weavers. Perhaps in her house in Bath there was one large room or shed with two or three looms in it. On a wooden seat in front of each loom sat a workman, or journeyman. He raised and lowered the web with his feet by means of pedals, and he passed the wooden shuttle through from one hand to another. On the floor beside him was a big wicket basket full of balls of wool.

The wife of Bath had perhaps sent one of her servants, his name might be Thomas, on horseback to the Cotswold Hills at sheep-shearing time. He had laden his horse with sacks of raw wool which he bought from the farmers. As he passed through the many villages on his way back to Bath, he stopped at a cottage door. In these cottages lived women who carded the wool and spun it into yarn on a spinning wheel. In several weeks' time Thomas would come back to the cottages to fetch the finished yarn.

When the cloth was woven, Thomas would be busy again carrying the bales to the finishers and dyers in Bath. They had a gild of their own, and a rule that cloth woven in Bath must be dyed by them. If the good wife wanted to sell her cloth near at hand she must take it, or send it by Thomas, into Bristol to the Saturday Market. Perhaps on the journey on which Chaucer met her, she had brought a bale of her best scarlet to sell in London. If so, she must take it to Blackwell Hall, a house which the mayor and citizens had just bought for a cloth market.

Amongst the merchants in Blackwell Hall that morning there might have been a man who, like the wife of Bath, came from the west of England. His name was Richard Whittington. His father had lived in Gloucestershire. He had land and probably sheep and cows and horses; but he had determined that his son should be a merchant. As soon as Dick was old enough, he was sent to London and apprenticed to a merchant called Sir Ivo Fitzwaryn. Probably Dick lived in his master's large house in London. Perhaps at first he had to sleep in the counting-house or office. He would get up at dawn, take down the shutters, sweep out the room, and see that Sir Ivo's papers and bills were all in order. But he was probably a quick and clever boy and a favourite with his master. He soon made friends with his master's daughter Alice. By and by Dick and Alice were married.

By the time the wife of Bath set out on her journey to Canterbury, Dick Whittington was already



a rich merchant—a mercer who bought velvets and damasks from Venetian and Genoese traders and sold them to the king and other wealthy men. He also bought fine English cloths and took them to the fairs in Flanders and northern France. Perhaps if he and the wife of Bath were both in Blackwell Hall that morning, the soft West country burr of her voice would remind him of his childhood in the country. Then he would stop and see her cheerful face behind her bale of scarlet cloth. When he saw the cloth and noticed, too, how soft and fine it was, I should think he would very likely buy it and send it abroad in his next ship.



HEAD-DRESSES OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

All this we may imagine. What we know is that a very few years later the king made Sir Richard Whittington Lord Mayor of London, and the citizens liked him so much that twice after that they chose him to be Lord Mayor.

All through the reigns of King Henry IV and King Henry V a terrible war was going on between England and France. It cost a great deal more money than the king possessed. Sir Richard Whittington and other great merchants lent him hundreds of pounds. The king found it very difficult to repay the money. There is a story,

which may be true, that one day Whittington invited him to dinner. As they stood talking by the great fire which burnt on the hearthstone, Sir Richard drew a bundle of papers from his pocket. The king saw that they were the records of all the money he owed to his host. Suddenly Sir Richard looked at the bills and tossed the whole bundle into the fire. He meant it as a sign that he knew the king could not pay him and that he forgave him all his debt.



HEAD-DRESSES OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Copied by rubbing old brasses in village churches.

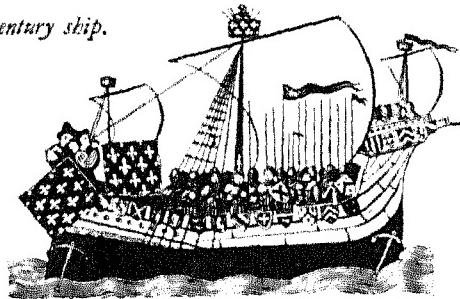
When Whittington wanted to sell English cloth at the fairs in Flanders or France, his servants would carry it on horseback, or by river, to the quayside on the Thames, or to the busy ports of Boston in Lincolnshire or King's Lynn or Yarmouth in Norfolk. Little ships would be riding at anchor in the harbours. They belonged to master mariners. Probably Whittington had bargained with several different mariners to carry his bales of cloth; for the channel was full of pirates, the sailors had no compass and there were no lighthouses. If a merchant put all his goods upon one ship he might lose everything in a storm or a fight with sea robbers. The ships

were small—only about twenty or thirty tons. They had high rounded sides and one deck. They were steered by a heavy oar at the side. There was one mast with a square-rigged sail. When Sir Richard and his servant went on board, they would find a crew of twenty-one men and a boy busy stowing bales of cloth, huge sacks of wools and bundles of hides in the hold. They looked anxiously at the weather, and wondered what chance there was of a safe return from their journey.

We do not know how many journeys over the sea Dick Whittington made. We do know that he came back safely from them all. When he died, in 1423, he had no children to use all the money he had made. He left it to London—the city he loved. He said it was to be used to build a great library for its Gild Hall, and to buy books for the use of the London merchants who came after him.

Dick Whittington and the cloth merchants and mercers were not the only men who grew rich in the days of Henry IV and Henry V. The wool merchants, too, became wealthy. We can see in our countryside and our old towns to-day some of

A fifteenth-century ship.



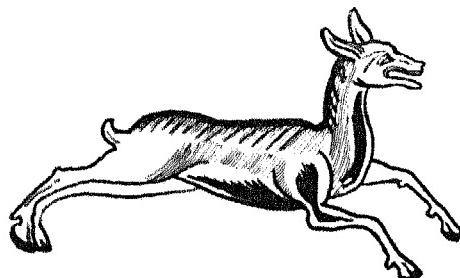
the ways in which they spent their money. In East Anglia and in Somerset and Gloucestershire many of them gave money to rebuild the parish church.



ROBERT PAGE,
WOOLSTAPLER,
A.D. 1434

This picture is taken from a memorial brass in memory of Robert Page. There are many such brasses in our churches. We can study the costume of the time from them.

The new churches had lofty towers with beautifully decorated stone battlements. The doors and windows were flat-headed or had a very wide arch above them. The glass was held in place by stone uprights or "mullions" which run right up to the top of the windows. Other merchants built beautiful houses decorated with wooden panelling. Others again left money for a brass plate, bearing a portrait of themselves with feet on wool-sacks or wool shears, to mark their place of burial. Some left money for the poor of their town or village. Some made conduits or channels of fresh water, or founded libraries or even schools.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHAT BECAME OF THE MONKS AND THE FRIARS

PERHAPS one day when you are on holiday in the west of England you may come to a place called Tintern. There between low wooded hills flows the lovely River Wye. On the banks of the river there stands a gray stone church. As you come near to it you can see the great arches of its windows, but they have no glass in them. There is no roof to the church. The pillars which once supported it are broken. The floor is carpeted with soft green grass. Swallows skim in and out through doors and windows. If you come out of the church and explore all round it you will find remains of other buildings, roofless, crumbling and grass grown. You are standing amidst the ruins of what was once a monastery.

It was in the reign of King Henry I that some monks from France first came to live here. A church, a dining-room, a dormitory and a guest house had been built for them before they came. All round were quiet hills and woods. No one lived anywhere near them. With the monks were men called lay brothers. While the monks gave most of their time to reading and writing and praising God, the lay brothers worked in the fields and looked after flocks of sheep. They, too, came to church every day, though not so many times in the day as the monks. They had a special part of the church for themselves.

All the brothers who came to live at Tintern had promised that they would possess nothing of their own. Brother Ambrose or brother Lawrence had clothes to wear, books to read, tools to use in the garden or on the land. But none of these things belonged to him. They were lent to him by the monastery. He was given by the "chamberlain", who looked after the monks' clothes, a white woollen tunic, reaching to his ankles, and another full white garment—or "habit"—with wide sleeves and a hood which he could pull over his head or leave hanging on his shoulders. When his clothes were worn out he gave them to a monk, called the almoner, to give away to poor people. When brother Ambrose went to bed at night he slept with the other monks in a long dormitory. He was not allowed to have thick fur coverlets or gaily coloured blankets on his bed. He must sleep with a pair of soft warm boots at his bedside. These he must put on when he was called at midnight to go with the other monks to praise God in the dim cold church.

Brother Ambrose had only a piece of bread and a small cup of wine for his breakfast. For dinner he probably had bean soup or fish, with perhaps some fruit or cheese. In the evening he had soup again and nuts or fruit. He worked hard all day long, except for a short rest in the afternoon. Perhaps he studied or wrote books, or taught the boys who were learning to be monks. Perhaps he grew herbs in the gardens or looked after the store rooms of the monastery. Whatever his task was he had to do it with as little talking as possible. If the abbot or

prior told him to change his work, he must do so at once. He must never go out of the monastery without the abbot's leave or on very special business.

Perhaps this sounds a dull and hard life to us. But Ambrose and the other brothers did not grumble. They saw the wild country round the monastery become more and more fruitful, as the lay brothers ploughed and sowed it and tended the sheep. They saw their library cupboard grow more and more full of the books they had copied and illuminated and bound. Day by day, and night after night, they praised God with psalms and hymns in their beautiful church. They prayed, too, for all the men and women in the world outside, who were too busy or too ignorant or too careless to pray for themselves.

So for many years in many monasteries in England men lived and worked and taught and prayed. They ate simple food, wore simple clothes, talked little and travelled less. But there came a time when these things changed. Amongst the guests who arrived at the Tabard Inn when Chaucer was there was a monk. His habit was trimmed at the wrist with costly fur. His hood was fastened beneath his chin with a curious gold brooch. His boots were of soft leather. He looked fat and well fed. Chaucer admired his beautifully groomed brown horse. He talked a good deal about hunting, and boasted of the swift greyhounds he kept. When the guests sat down to dinner, they began to talk about the food they liked best. The monk said that for his part he thought nothing was nicer than a good fat swan,

roasted. The old rules for monasteries, he said, were quite out of fashion. He saw no use in staying always in the cloister. It was much better fun to go out hunting.

Near the monk sat a friar—perhaps one of the Little Brothers of St. Francis. His name was Huberd; he, too, was very different from the friars we saw in chapter eight. He still travelled about the country making friends with people and listening to tales of their sorrows and sins. But these were not the poor and sick people to whom St. Francis had bidden his followers go. Huberd's friends were rich innkeepers and farmers, or wealthy women like the wife of Bath. He played the fiddle and sang merry ballads. He wore a warm worsted cloak.

Chaucer only laughed at the monk and the friar, but some of the poor people in the villages began to dislike them. They thought they had no business to be rich and well fed, while the people who worked for them had not enough to eat. When the peasants went up to London to find King Richard II, they killed some monks on the way and so frightened others that they promised to be better masters.

Rich men now began to think that monasteries were of little use. When they made their wills they no longer left them land or money. For reasons which you will understand some day, the wealth which the monks had would not buy as much as it had done in old days. The Father Abbot began to look for new ways of getting rich. He knew that people such as the wife of Bath wanted wool. He thought he would like to keep more sheep. If he

kept them on the common with the village sheep they might catch diseases and die. He wanted to keep them by themselves. He had not enough land to do this as well as to grow all the corn the monks needed. He knew his neighbour, Sir Hugh, in the next village had made his peasants pay 5d. an acre for their land instead of 4d. This had made them so poor that they had given up their strips of land to Sir Hugh. Some of them had gone off to the towns to work as craftsmen, others worked as hired labourers in the village. Sometimes an abbot thought he would do the same; he put fences round the lands. He bought sheep at the neighbouring fair and set them to graze within the fences. At sheep-shearing time, great sacks of wool were piled up in the barns. By and by the wool buyers came and bought the wool. The abbot's money chest began to grow full again.

In the year 1509—rather more than a hundred years from Chaucer's time—a young man of eighteen became king of England. He was fair-haired, tall and handsome. We call him Henry VIII. When he travelled about the country, Henry sometimes stayed in monasteries. Once he stayed at Peterborough and he saw its great churches, gilt crosses and silver chalices; he noticed the rich copes which the monks wore in procession. He stayed in the comfortable house in which the abbot lived; he saw how many servants he had to wait upon him and what good food was cooked in his kitchen; he thought that some of the monks were lazy, and that others spent more time in doing their accounts and riding about their lands than in saying their

prayers; he noticed how some of the monks went out hunting, fell asleep during the church services, and sat in the sun and gossiped instead of working. There were plenty of rich merchants in England at this time who wanted to buy land. They thought that if the king took all the houses and lands of the monks he could sell these to them. This would bring the king plenty of money, which they knew he wanted very badly.

HENRY VIII



So it came about that in the year 1536 some of the king's servants might have been seen riding about the roads of England visiting monasteries. When they came to the monastery gate they knocked and told the porter to take them to the abbot. They made him tell them what lands the monastery possessed and what they were worth. They went into the church and the library, the dining-room and the kitchen, and made lists of all their precious things. Later, they sent for the monks, one by one. They asked them all sorts of questions. Was the abbot a

good man? Were the services properly sung? Did the monks work hard and stay in the monastery? Brother John loved the monastery. He was an old man now. He had lived there ever since he was seven years old. He would say nothing but good of everyone and everything.

Brother Hugh had been sent to be a monk by his father. He would far rather have been a merchant. He had been punished by the abbot only a few days before for falling asleep in church. He was very ready to tell the visitors that the choir books were old and torn and there was no money to buy new ones. He declared that the old abbot sometimes nodded and fell asleep in his stall in church. He said the monks kept dogs and brought them into the monastery dining-room and fed them at dinner time; sometimes, so he said, they even brought them into church.

Brother Stephen was very young and shy. At first he could not say anything when the visitors spoke to him. Then they began to scold him in loud voices and to suggest to him that the abbot was lazy and that the monks went out hunting. He was so frightened that he said "Yes" to everything.

When the visitors had written down all that the brothers had said they rode away. They went back to King Henry. They took with them lists of everything which the monasteries possessed, as well as accounts of how the monks behaved. You can guess that some of the stories they had collected about the brothers were true, but many of them were not true at all.

This was enough for King Henry. A few months later, visitors came again to the monastery. They told the abbot and the monks that they must go. Soon the townsfolk, or villagers, saw the abbot ride sadly away. Then the monks came out of the great gate carrying just a few possessions. Some of them looked cheerful, others looked very sad. Some of them were very old men. The tears rolled down their cheeks, as they hobbled away on the arm of a younger brother. The next day there was a sound of hammering and sawing. Men were tearing the leaden roof from the church, pulling down and packing ornaments of gilt and silver, stowing away jewelled satin copes. For days the gates stood open for everyone to go in and out as he would. The journeymen and apprentice boys, the ale wives and cooks, wandered about looking at everything. One found and carried off a beautifully written book with illuminated letters. Another took a gilt candle-stick when no one was looking.

At last, news came that a rich merchant had bought the monastery and its lands and gardens from the king. Builders arrived and pulled down parts of the church and some of the other buildings. They used the stone to build a large new house, with wide chimneys and glass windows, a porch, a huge kitchen, stables and barns. The old monastery buildings stood roofless. The autumn rain fell, the winds howled round. The glass in the windows was broken. The stone-work, in which the glass was set, gradually crumbled. Grass came up between the stones of the floor. Birds built their

WHAT BECAME OF THE MONKS AND FRIARS 105
nests in niches where once figures of saints had stood.

King Henry made the friars, too, give him their rich houses and churches. This is why, for the most part, we only have street names in our towns to remind us now of where they lived. This is why, too, as we travel about England, we often find monasteries deserted and unused like the one at Tintern, with which our chapter began.

In villages and towns in the south of England many people were glad to see the end of the monks and friars, but in the north they were still greatly loved, and there was much sadness at their departing.



Benedictine Monk.

Benedictine Nun.

Cistercian.

Franciscan.

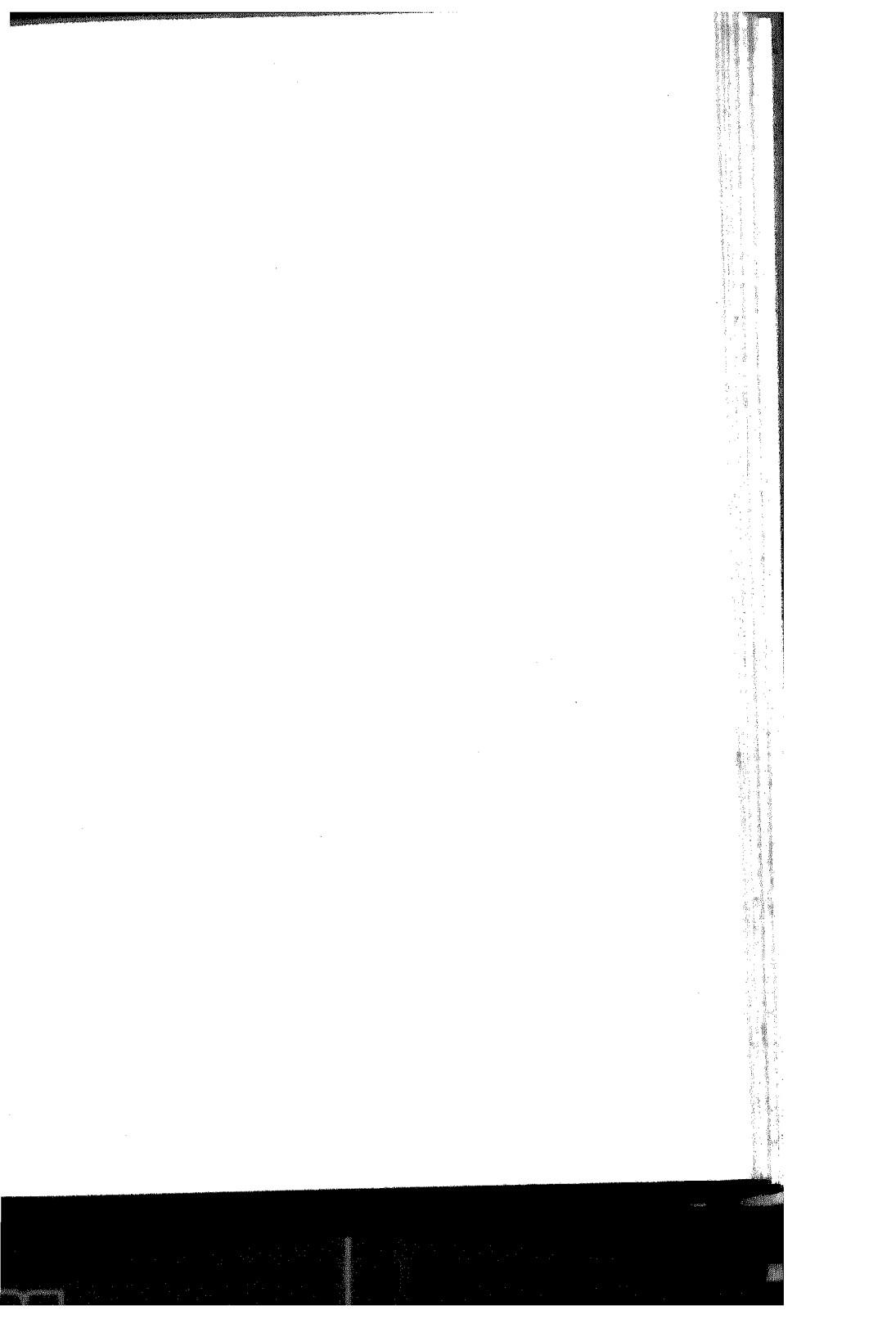
CHAPTER TWELVE

NEW LEARNING AND NEW LANDS

ONE day, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a little boy, of probably about ten years old, was sent for the first time to school. His name was Richard Hakluyt. His home was in that same west country from which came Sir Richard Whittington and the wife of Bath. It was not very far from Tintern Abbey. Perhaps he rode up from the country on horseback behind one of his father's servants. Perhaps another horse carried the leather bags in which his clothes were packed, long hose and short tunics, lace collars and ruffles for his neck, flat caps trimmed with a single feather, fine shirts for Sundays and soft leather shoes.

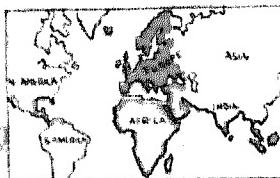
The school to which he was going was at Westminster. The monks, as you know, had been turned out of the Abbey, but the beautiful church and many of the other buildings still stood. There was no schoolmaster left to train young monks in the cloister, but Queen Elizabeth had founded a new school for boys quite near the Abbey church.

The journey must have taken many days. Perhaps Richard may have spent one night in Oxford. There he would see the Colleges to which one day he hoped to go, and the boys and young men and their masters thronging the narrow streets. All night long he would hear the chiming of many clocks from the church and college towers. For the rest of his journey the road would follow the River Thames,



A.D. 1500
TO A.D. 1558

AD
1500



THE KNOWN WORLD IN 1500

AD
1558

1509

ACCESSION OF HENRY VIII



SPANISH POWER IN EUROPE, 1515

1515

WOLSEY MADE CARDINAL

1514

HENRY
DEFENDER OF THE FAITH



ARMS OF HENRY VIII

1515



GATEWAY, HAMPTON COURT

1529

ACT OF SUPREMACY



FALL OF WOLSEY

1530

SUPPRESSION
OF THE
MONASTERIES



ANNE BOLEYN EXECUTED

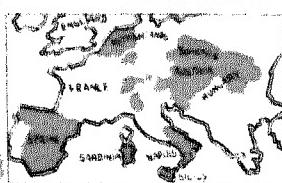
1533



FOUNTAINS ABBEY

1534

PRAYER BOOK AUTHORISED



SPANISH POWER IN EUROPE, 1558

AD
1558

THE AGE OF AD 1558 ELIZABETH TO AD 1603

AD.



ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH



UNION OF FRANCE AND SCOTLAND

AD.

1558



JOHN KNOX PREACHING



REVOLT OF THE NORTH



ELIZABETHAN
SOLDIERS

A LUTE



WILLIAM BYRD
COMPOSING



DRAKE SAILS ROUND THE WORLD



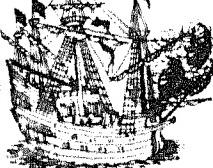
AN AMERICAN INDIAN
RALEIGH'S SETTLEMENT IN VIRGINIA

1559

EXECUTION OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS



DEFEAT OF THE
ARMADA



1560

BANKSIDE, WITH THE
BEAR GARDEN AND THE GLOBE THEATRE



1603 DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

1603

through woods and meadows and villages, till at last the towers of Westminster came in sight. Beyond them lay the pleasant Strand, lined with the great houses of merchants and bishops. The gardens of the houses on one side of the road ran down to the river. Each house had its flight of steps and its landing-stage. Boats and barges, rowed by sturdy watermen, carried people backwards and forwards from Westminster to London City, or beyond to the Queen's Palace at Greenwich, or the busy dockyards of Deptford and Woolwich.*

There was one big schoolroom in Richard's school. The boys sat on forms according to their ages. There was one master for the upper forms and one for the lower forms. Work began at six o'clock in the morning. There was a very short break for breakfast at nine o'clock, a long one for dinner from eleven to one, and half an hour at three. Lessons ended at half-past five, when the master read a chapter from the Bible and the boys sang two verses of a psalm. We can imagine what a noise there was when school ended, after such long lessons.

But Richard and his friends were really fortunate boys. Their lessons were much more interesting than those which had been taught in the days of Dick Whittington.

Many Englishmen had lately travelled in Italy. There they met scholars from Greece. They had learnt Greek from them and had made or bought copies of Greek books. They were learning to

* See the pictures of Bankside on Chart V

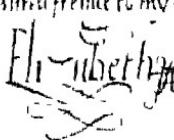
know the exciting history of Sparta and of Athens, the stories of the adventures of Ulysses and of the siege of Troy. In Italy, too, they had met great painters and sculptors and workers in metal. The saints and angels in the new Italian pictures were copied from real people. They sat in flowery gardens or in houses or stables, through whose windows showed streams and mountains, rocks and rivers. All these lovely things filled men's hearts with joy. They became less stern and cruel. They began to think that children at school should have interesting books to read, such as they could understand, and that they should not be flogged or cruelly treated.

In schools before Richard's time there had been very few books. No one knew how to print, so that every new copy of a book had to be written by hand. This made them very expensive. Boys had to learn their lessons by heart from their masters. Nearly all their work depended upon what they could remember. They read and wrote very little. Some fifty years or more before Richard went to school, someone discovered how to print. An English merchant, called William Caxton, saw some printed books when he was travelling in the Netherlands. He opened a printer's shop in Westminster, close to the place where Westminster School now stood. Thus, by the time Richard went to school, there were more books and they did not cost quite so much.

Now that boys could have books to read, it seemed important also to teach them to write beautifully. In the monasteries, the monks who had copied books

had lifted the pen from their parchment at the end of every letter, or even of every stroke. The new writing masters began to teach their pupils not to lift the pen until they came to the end of the word. In this way they joined the letters as we do. They taught two different ways of writing. One was rather like printing, but in the other all the letters sloped to the right.

Yf wylde the wel I am out offysse ayde vnyt. monenge nor wylde that
 your grace shalde haue se myn agymen of me that I haue so litel respecte
 to my new honeste that I wylde maiintene nif I had suffyente poynts
 of the same, and so your grace shalde preue me whan it comes to the pointe
 yf and thus I wil your farwel desir me god alwaies to assisse you in al your
 affaeres . written in myre faire hofefeld this 21 of Febrarye

Your assynd frende to my litel
 power


This is part of a letter written by Princess (afterwards Queen) Elizabeth to her brother, Edward VI, who had taught by masters who taught the New Learning (Latin and Greek literature) and practised the new chancery writing

Masters cared now not only about what their boys learnt, but also about their games. They thought it was good for them to learn wrestling, archery, swimming, riding and dancing. Football, which in those days was played in the streets without any goal posts, they thought was a rough game, unsuited to well-behaved children.

One day--perhaps it was a saint's name day--Richard had a holiday. He decided to go and see his

cousin, another Richard Hakluyt, who was a lawyer and lived in the Middle Temple. Perhaps young Richard took a barge at Westminster stairs and was towed down the river to Middle Temple stairs. Perhaps he walked, stopping to peer at Queen Eleanor's cross in Charing Village, and passing along the Strand, and through the city gates at Temple Bar. When he arrived in his cousin's room he found him sitting at a table. Spread out before him were a large map, and a pile of books, which we should call geography books. Mr. Hakluyt was pleased to see his young cousin. He soon noticed how eagerly the boy looked at his map. He took a pointer and began to explain it to him, and to show him all the seas and rivers, capes and kingdoms marked on it.

If we could have looked over Richard's shoulder we should have been puzzled. Large parts of what we call the Arctic and Antarctic were marked as "unknown lands". There was only an outline of S. America and of S. Africa, and the places and rivers marked in N. America were all upon the east coast. The Atlantic Ocean was full of imaginary islands which do not appear on any map to-day. This, as you may guess, was because, in Queen Elizabeth's day, there were great parts of the earth which no white man had ever visited.

From the map, Mr. Hakluyt turned to the Bible. He read to his young cousin verses 23 and 24 of Psalm 107:

"They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep."

Richard was thrilled. He saw, in his imagination, pictures of strange islands and lofty snow-capped mountains, palm-fringed beaches, dragons and elephants, precious stones, mules laden with gold and silver. He thought of the brave men, Dutch and Portuguese, English and Spanish, who sailed the uncharted seas in their little ships. He knew now what he meant to do when he left school. He could not himself go exploring with the English sailors his cousin had spoken of—Chancellor and Willoughby, Frobisher, Hawkins and Drake. He would give his time to making a great book to honour their names. In it he would write their adventures, so that all men might know that English folk are amongst the great travellers and explorers of the world.

Soon after this, the time came when Richard was old enough to leave Westminster School and go to Oxford. In the great library, which Duke Humphrey of Gloucester had founded there a hundred years before, he found the books he wanted. He read in Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, in French and in English, about lands which he could never hope to visit. He collected maps and globes. As soon as he was able he began to lecture. What he had to say was so thrilling that men and boys crowded his lecture room. He made friends with sea captains and merchants, and listened to their yarns. He crossed the sea himself to France and talked to many people there.

At last he wrote a book, which he called “The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics and Discoveries of the English Nation, made by sea or

over-land, to the remote and farthest distant quarters of the earth". In it he collected stories from many writers. One tells how Mr. William Hawkins sailed in the good ship Paul of Plymouth to Brazil. How Mr. Hawkins there behaved himself with so wise a friendliness that a Brazilian king came back with him to London. He was made welcome by King Henry VIII of England, but men wondered to see that he wore two little bones sticking out of holes in his cheeks, and a large jewel in the middle of his chin.

Hakluvt wrote a whole chapter about the wisdom and gentleness of elephants. He really knew a good deal about them, but someone had told him, and he believed, that "they make continual war upon dragons, who desire their blood because it is so cold".

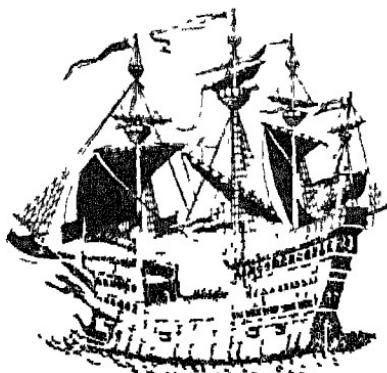
Into his book he put an account of how Sir John Hawkins sailed to Mexico and was betrayed by Spaniards, of how Sir John Davis tried to find a way to China by Greenland and the north of N. America and how his men played football with the Eskimos. He found, too, the story of how the little ship Marigold sailed to Newfoundland and was chased by a whale, of how Sir Richard Grenville in his ship, the Revenge, fought a Spanish fleet off the Azores. He found a list of the wonderful things which might be had in Virginia—turpentine and resin, cedar wood and wines, nut oils and otter fur, civet-cats, iron, copper and pearl, sweet gums and dyes.

Some of the ships which made the journeys he relates were not much bigger than those used by Dick Whittington. Others were a good deal larger.

They had four masts and could carry large sails. They had also high "castles" fore and aft on which small guns could be mounted, for King Henry VII and King Henry VIII had taken a great interest in the ships of England. They had built new dockyards at Portsmouth, at Deptford and Woolwich on the Thames, and at Chatham near the mouth of the Medway.

Nevertheless, to sail the sea without chart or compass was still a perilous adventure, and Hakluyt was right to be proud of the high courage of the English "sea dogs", and to be thrilled as he saw men making new and better maps of the world.

SHIP OF HENRY VIII



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

BUSY SQUIRES AND PARSONS

LET us come back to our village when the Stuart kings, James and Charles I, or Charles II and James II, were ruling in England. That is at almost any time in the seventeenth century. It is Tuesday in Easter week. The trees are in bud, and woods and copses and hedgerows are full of primroses and other flowers. Blackbirds and thrushes and chaffinches are singing. The sun is up, but it is still early when John, the Sexton, comes from his thatched cottage to the church, and begins to ring the bell.

Out from the parsonage door comes Parson Collins. James, the miller, hurries along the road. Jolly-faced Dick Robinson, the innkeeper from *The Woolpack*, is coming, too. And here are three or four farmers, riding in on horseback from their farmhouses a mile or two beyond the village. They are all coming to the Vestry of the Church to hold their Easter Vestry Meeting. They will sit on old oak benches down the sides of a long table in the vestry, and Parson Collins will sit in a heavy oak chair at the table head.

There is much work to be done. Farmer Goodfellow and Farmer Little are churchwardens. They must tell the Vestry what they have spent during the year out of the parish rates—that is, the money which everyone owning land in the parish must contribute to the parish fund. Perhaps since last

Easter the churchwardens have bought stockings or coats, or a few hundred-weights of coal, to give to poor old men who are so doubled up with rheumatism that they cannot work. Perhaps they have had to pay the thatcher to re-thatch a cottage belonging to the church; they may have had to pay for the repair of the "stocks", where vagrants are fastened by the legs; or to employ men or boys to catch sparrows which spoiled the crops, or foxes which robbed the hen-roosts. When they have read out their accounts people will grumble a little and say this was too expensive, or that ought not to have been spent. Next, they will draw up a list of farmers or tradespeople who they think would make good constables, or a good overseer of the poor to whom people may go if they are old or sick or in any other misfortune so that they can no longer work, or a good surveyor of the highway to see that everybody in the parish does six days' work a year mending the roads. The farmers in their Vestry Meetings are not allowed to choose these people themselves, but they send lists of names to the Justices of the Peace who will appoint them.

There are some parish officers who will be chosen at once at the Vestry Meeting. Perhaps John Shoemaker will be chosen to be beadle. He will have to help the constable to drive beggars off the streets, or go round to the houses of the farmers and



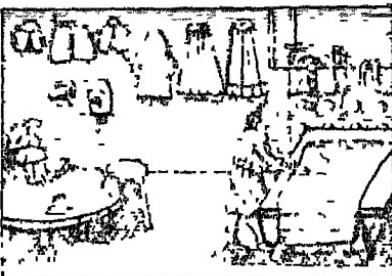
collect the poor rate for the overseer, or to help the churchwardens to keep children and dogs and even grown-up people from making a noise in the churchyard at service time on Sunday. John Shoemaker does not want to be beadle. He will receive no pay for his work, and he will not have time to make and mend as many pairs of shoes for the village folk as he would like. But it is no use to refuse. If he is chosen, he must do the work or pay someone to do it for him. Perhaps Adam Gotobed will be chosen as dog whipper. Adam is a bit of an idle fellow, and thinks it will be good fun to whip the dogs the farmers bring to church on Sunday to prevent them howling when the musicians—the fiddler and the double bass—begin to play the psalms. He will also enjoy shaking or touching with his whip anyone he sees fall asleep during the sermon.

Farmer Goodfellow and Farmer Little feel important as churchwardens. They say they are willing to go on for another year, so when a little more business has been done, the meeting comes to an end. The parson and the miller and the farmers come trooping out again into the spring sunshine.

The last man to come out is Thomas, the constable. As he turns into the main street of the village he hears angry voices and sees two young men preparing to fight. Followed by the beadle he hurries up to separate them. He leads them to the stocks on the village green. He fastens their feet in the holes and leaves them to sit there. Everyone who passes by laughs at them, or throws a cabbage stalk or a bad egg or some other rubbish at them.

The constable goes home to his cottage and has his dinner, for it is now twelve o'clock. As he goes in he fastens the staff, which he carries to show his office, into a bracket beside his door.

That evening he must take the two quarrellers to be tried by the Justice of the Peace. The manor house of the village has long stood empty. As there is no squire living there, the King has made Parson Collins a Justice of the Peace. Thomas takes his two prisoners out of the stocks and marches them up to the rectory. Parson Collins is a rich man. He has many strips in the village cornfields, and many cows on the common. He lives in a large house with a large garden round it laid out in straight walks and



- 1 Tudor.

terraces. Thomas takes the two young men into a large room, furnished with oak tables and high-backed wooden chairs. Against the wall there are some bookshelves, with leather-bound books in them. The room is lighted by casement windows, filled with small squares of glass set in leaden frames. There is an open stone fireplace on which logs are burning. The smoke escapes up the great chimney.

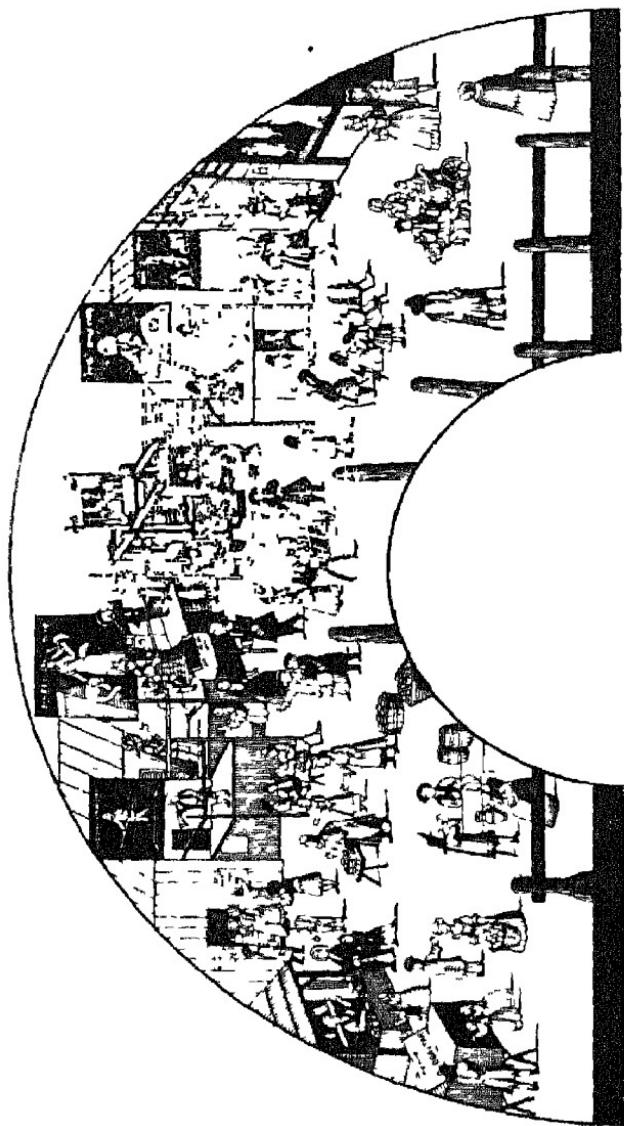
Parson Collins comes in and says good evening to Thomas. He asks what the two young men have been doing. When Thomas has told him, he scolds them well and tells Thomas to give them a good

whipping and send them home. Just then the door is pushed open and an old woman with a discontented face comes in. She complains that the parish overseer has only given her half a hundredweight of coals. She thinks she should have a whole hundred-weight. Parson Collins sees her blue hands and gnarled knuckles. He feels sorry for her. Without asking her how much money she has, he promises to tell the overseer he must give her more.

Now the sun has set, and the Parson is anxious to have his supper and go to bed, for he has to be up early in the morning. He is excited about this, for he has to ride to the county town, where he will meet all the other Justices of the county—some squires, some clergymen like himself, some well-to-do farmers. Before he gets into his great four-poster bed, pulls on his night-cap and puts out his candle, he sets out his best clothes—his black cloth tail-coat and breeches, his black silk stockings and buckle shoes, his clean white cravat, his riding gaiters and cloak and his wide-brimmed hat.

In the morning he is up as soon as it is light. His man has his horse saddled in the stable yard, and he sets off on the long road to the town. His wife has given him plenty of shopping to do when he has finished his business. She wants a sugar loaf and some spices from the grocer, some yards of fine lace and some green ribbons from the mercer, and a piece of scarlet cloth from the draper. When at length he arrives at the town, his horse's hoofs clatter upon the cobblestones, and he looks about eagerly at the fashionably dressed men and women who are going

A MARKET SCENE OF 1713



This is an old picture of a market in 1713. There are many different things and movements. Find them and describe what they are. What is the woman sitting on? Is she part of the picture, for sale? Why does she think the two women and the child above her are quarrelling?

in and out of the shops or standing about the market stalls. He makes his way to *The Pelican Inn*. Here he will meet all the other Justices of the Peace of the county in a meeting called Quarter Sessions, because it is held four times in a year.

In the dining parlour of the inn most of the Justices have already assembled. There are squires and clergymen and farmers from all over the county. There are parish overseers, too, and surveyors of the highways, constables, and numbers of farmers, millers, weavers and others who have been called to act as jurymen. They are smoking long clay pipes and drinking beer from pewter pots. They are talking, too, for it is three months or

Brad's wife,

1649

more since they last met, and there is

much to tell about the lambing season, the state of the crops, the winter floods, or the latest news from London. When at last silence falls, one of the Justices is chosen as chairman of the meeting.

The "gentlemen of the jury" then have to tell the Justices of many things which need to be set right in the county. The bridge over the river at such and such a place was swept away in a flood last November and must be repaired. The House of Correction, to which beggars and wandering persons are sent, has a leaky roof. The side ditches along the highway, which should have been cleaned out by such and such a parish, are choked, so that in rainy weather the road is flooded. The farmers in such and such a



parish have left their rubbish standing in the roads so that there is no room for waggons to pass. The constable of Bewsey is lazy, and allows beggars to roam about the village and thieves to break into the farmers' barns. Some ale-house keepers of the county are using false measures.

The Justices of the Peace will consider all these complaints and order them to be set right. They will then hear from the constables of the parishes about all the wrong things which have been done in their villages or towns. Seventeen people in one parish have stayed away from church on every Sunday for a month. The Justices say they must be fined. Roger Fuller, of such and such a place, has a foul chimney which may catch fire and light the thatch of his cottage. He must sweep his chimney and also pay a fine. The villagers of such and such a place have carried gravel from the common without leave. Farmer Bredon did not send his man and team of horses to help to mend the roads of the parish. One village, so the constables say, has even failed to have a constable at all. All these faults must be set right, and the people who have committed them must be punished, or fined. Then more serious cases must be tried; people who are accused of theft, or highway robbery, or burning down hay-stacks or straw ticks.

Next, the overseers of the poor in each parish, must show their



London People, 1630



*CRYING HIS
BIRFS*

"*Fine wrighting inke*"

accounts—how much they have spent on feeding the sick and poor in the poot-house; how much on providing clothes for the orphan girls and boys they have sent out to service, or put to learn a trade, such as lace-making for the girls, or carpentry for the boys. The overseers will ask the Justices to give them leave to collect a rate from every land-holder in their parishes in the coming year.

Lastly, the Justices will enquire how much corn is coming into the markets, and will say how much the farmers may charge for it, and also what wages farm workers, ploughmen and shepherds, cowherds and dairymaids, may ask for the coming year.

All this business will take a good many days. When at last it is over, Parson Collins will be anxious to get home. He will say good-bye to his friends, make the purchases for his wife, and buy perhaps a new saddlebag or a leather-bound book for himself and some "*fine wrighting inke*". At last he will ride home, hoping to get in before dark lest he should be overtaken by highwaymen on the way.



Citizen's Daughter,
1649.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A PLAY

Scene I. Parson Collins saying good-bye to his wife

Scene II. Parson Collins talks to friends at the Pelican Inn about the weather and the crops. The presiding Justice (Squire Dale) calls them to order and the business begins

Scene III. Parson Collins is welcomed home, and he and his wife open the parcels

AD
TO AD

AD



A JACOBEAN HOUSE
OLD CHARLTON KENT



GUNPOWDER PLOT

AD

AUTHORISED VERSION OF THE
BIBLE



SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER



A 17TH CENTURY
CANNON



ROUNDHEAD AND CAVALIER



KING CHARLES EXECUTED

THE COMMONWEALTH



THE GREAT PLAGUE



THE GREAT FIRE



WREN CHURCH ST BRIDES, LONDON



MONMOUTH REBELLION



ACCESSION
OF
WILLIAM
AND MARY



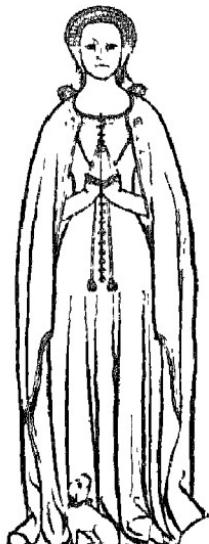
DRESS IN 1700

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

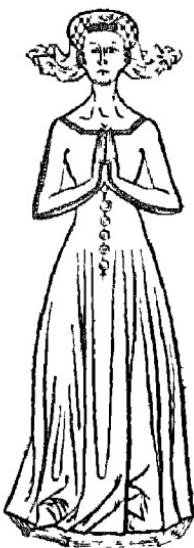
ROADS AND TRAVELLERS WHEN THE STUARTS WERE KINGS

IF you had been in church one Sunday, in the early summer, any time when James I or Charles I was King of England, you might have seen the village constable or one of the churchwardens stand up in his pew after the sermon. He would say in a loud voice that on Monday, the people of the parish must come and do their "statute labour" on the roads. Early the next morning, if it was fine, there would be a great rumbling of cart wheels, and the sound of feet and voices. Every farmer who owns a plough must send a cart, drawn by horses or oxen, and two men, to help to mend the roads. Every man who has a house or cottage in the village must go himself, or send someone in his place. So about six o'clock on Monday morning they would all gather, perhaps outside the village inn, or on the village green. There, the farmer who has been chosen surveyor of the highways for the year, is waiting for them. They will have to work every day that week, from Monday morning till Saturday evening, and the surveyor will tell them which part of the village roads they are to mend.

If you or I looked at those roads we should think they were just farm tracks, and very bad ones at that. If the spring has been wet they will be deep in mud and water. If it has been dry they will be thick with dust. But the village people of those days did not



1485



1390



1392



1491



1592



1427

Elizabeth Paginum

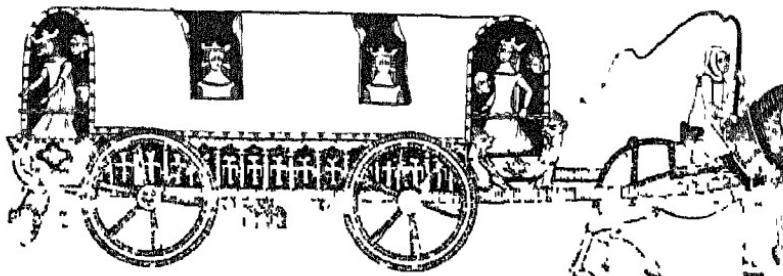
care. They hardly ever wanted to leave the village. Anyone who did have to travel, such as the squire going to the Sessions or up to London, would go on horseback, dressed in a thick cloak and long jack-boots reaching to his hips. The soft mud or dust of the road was very easy for his horse's hoofs. When the farmers wanted to drive their cows or pigs to market they, too, liked a nice soft surface which did not hurt the animals' feet. So no one was very anxious to mend the roads. Some of the people who should have come were busy on their own farms and stayed away. The others dawdled and gossiped. Two or three men might be told by the surveyor to fetch gravel from the gravel pit. They would start off with a cart drawn by two lazy oxen, and everyone would wait about until at last they returned. Very slowly, with long rests, the gravel would be thrown into the worst holes and left for the passers-by to tread down. On Saturday night, everyone would go home contentedly, and the roads would be left for another year.

But if most of the villagers in England were content with their roads, people who were obliged to travel long distances were beginning to want better ones. At the same time the roads themselves were getting worse and worse because they were more used. London was becoming a large and busy town for those days. In the closely packed streets of the City lived and worked perhaps as many as 150,000 people. Green fields and woods stretched beyond the city walls on the north and east, but to the west, men had already built themselves shops and houses

outside the gates. Across the river, too, joined to the northern bank by one stone bridge, were the houses and churches and streets of Southwark. All the people who lived in these narrow crowded streets had to be fed. Every autumn, if you could have taken a horse and ridden out along the roads which led to Essex and Norfolk, you might have met great herds of cattle and pigs, and flocks of geese and turkeys, walking up to London to be sold in the markets.

James I, who became King of England when Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, had been King of Scotland since he was a baby. Now that he was king of both countries, and lived most of the time in his palace at Westminster, many messengers had to travel backwards and forwards between London and Edinburgh. They travelled on horseback, and used the same soft roads as the cattle and the geese.

If we travelled by the roads of the north and west of England we might find a raised path about two or three feet broad, paved with stones, running along the side or middle. Perhaps we should think this a nice dry place to walk or ride on, but we must beware. Hark! There is the tinkling of a bell!



Round the bend of the road comes a long file of horses. There may be thirty or forty of them. It is for them that the stone pathway has been made. Their leader wears the bell we heard. It is to warn us to get out of the way. All the horses carry baskets or tubs—one on either side—fastened by a harness that goes over their backs. They are carrying fish from Devonshire to London, or coals to Bath or Bristol, flints and clay to Staffordshire to make cups and pots and plates, or wool from the Cotswold Hills.

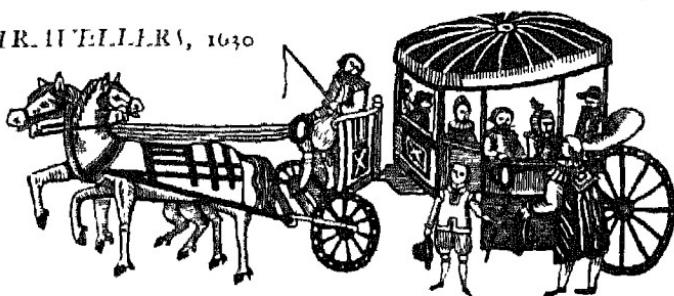
All these cows and horses and pigs and geese moving about the soft roads made the holes deeper and the mud thicker every year. Moreover, sometimes when the road came to a river, instead of going over it on a bridge, it stopped, and began again on the other side. If a bridge had been made it was often very narrow, and sometimes very steep. When there was no bridge the animals had to wade through the water. Sometimes there were stepping-stones for people on foot, but after heavy rain these got covered with water. Some people crossed the rivers on stilts. Sometimes, after a bad storm, the water was so deep that men, and animals too, were



drowned. While James I was still King of England, people were beginning to find that they were warmer and drier if they travelled in great hooded waggons, drawn by eight horses, or in coaches, drawn by four. These heavy coaches had no springs. Their wheels were made of wood, bound with iron. They had no windows, and could not carry more than eight passengers, with their luggage in a great basket hanging at the side. They rattled and rumbled over the roads and made the mud thicker and the holes much deeper. Old-fashioned people, or people who had made their money by carrying passengers in barges up and down the Thames between London and Westminster, grumbled. They said it was a "rattling, towling, rumbling age", and complained that "all the world runs on wheels".

But more and more people get used to new things as time goes on, and find that they are more convenient than the old ways. By and by, post chaises began to run along the roads between English towns, such as London and Bath and Bristol, or Exeter, or Norwich. These were carriages with four wheels. They had seats for three passengers and a roof to strap luggage on. They could be hired at special

IR. HELLERS, 1630



inns called "post-houses". At each post-house a change of horses would be ready. Only rich people could afford to travel like this. Poorer folk had to take seats on the public coaches, and the poorest of all travelled in the long waggons.

As the roads became worse and worse, the wheels of the waggons and the coaches sometimes stuck in the ruts. Then all the passengers had to get out and stand in the cold and the rain while help was fetched from the nearest farm. At last, with a great deal of pushing and shouting and stamping of horses, the heavy wheels would be started again. The chilly passengers would get back into their seats and the journey would go on as before.

In the year 1692, when the Dutchman, William III, was King of England, a man named Littleton wrote a little book which he called "A Proposal for Maintaining and Repairing the Highways". In it he said that people who used the roads ought to see that they were mended, not the people who stayed at



*This is a water
laid on in the seven-
teenth century. Water
sellers like this
brought it to sell to
those people who had
small gardens.*

TRAVELLERS, 1690



home in the villages. Of course, the travellers could not really mend the roads themselves, but there was no reason why they should not pay other people to do the mending if someone could be set to collect the money or "toll" from them. Someone thought of the plan of putting gates across the Great North Road, along which waggons brought food from Scotland and Yorkshire to London. Men were posted at the gates to collect the money and take it to the "Turnpike Trusts". The villagers of Stilton, in Huntingdonshire, were so angry at the

thought of having a gate built across their road that it was never put up, and the road at Caxton in Cambridgeshire ran across flat open country, so that the waggons and horsemen got off it and drove over the fields and so did not have to go through the gate. But

little by little people began to think the toll-gates, as they were called, were a good plan.

After 1706, squires and farmers in many parts of England got leave from Parliament to put up toll-gates, and to spend the money that was paid by the travellers who passed through them on keeping the road in repair. Little houses were built beside the gates. Here the man lived who collected the money. When he heard the sound of a horse's hoofs, or the rumble of wheels, or the guard's horn, he would



Do not take tolls, but mends
are paid

come out in his tall hat, white stockings and white apron. He might perhaps take 1½d. for a horse, 1d. for twenty cows, 8d. for twenty sheep or pigs, and as much as 2s. for a cart or a coach drawn by four horses. At first the people who used the roads were very angry. Sometimes bands of men would collect at night. Armed with rusty swords, pitchforks, axes and clubs, they pulled down the gates and the little toll-houses. Once they encamped in the streets of Bristol, and made a great noise, beating drums, blowing hunting horns, shouting, and breaking windows. The town constables and watchmen did not know what to do, so there the noisy crowd stayed for a fortnight, until at last the Justices of the Peace sent for some soldiers who came and drove them away.

Even when toll-gates were put up, some of the roads were still very bad. It was not until the days of King George IV and King William IV—a little over a hundred years ago—that England began to have roads made of firm flints bedded in sand, and that bridges were built over most of the rivers. There are hardly any toll-gates left in England to-day, but sometimes when we travel we may see a little one-storeyed eight-sided house close to the road-side. If we ask what it is we may find that it is an old toll-house. Then we shall know that we are travelling



In the seventeenth century ministers also could not use the Prayer Book drawn up in the reign of Edward VI, or who would not by their clerks come to be called Non-conformists

on a road which has run there for at least a hundred and fifty or two hundred years, and that once there were gates across it by that little house. If we shut our eyes, perhaps we can imagine that we hear a coach horn blowing, and see the toll-keeper come out of his cottage door, in his tall hat and his white apron and stockings.

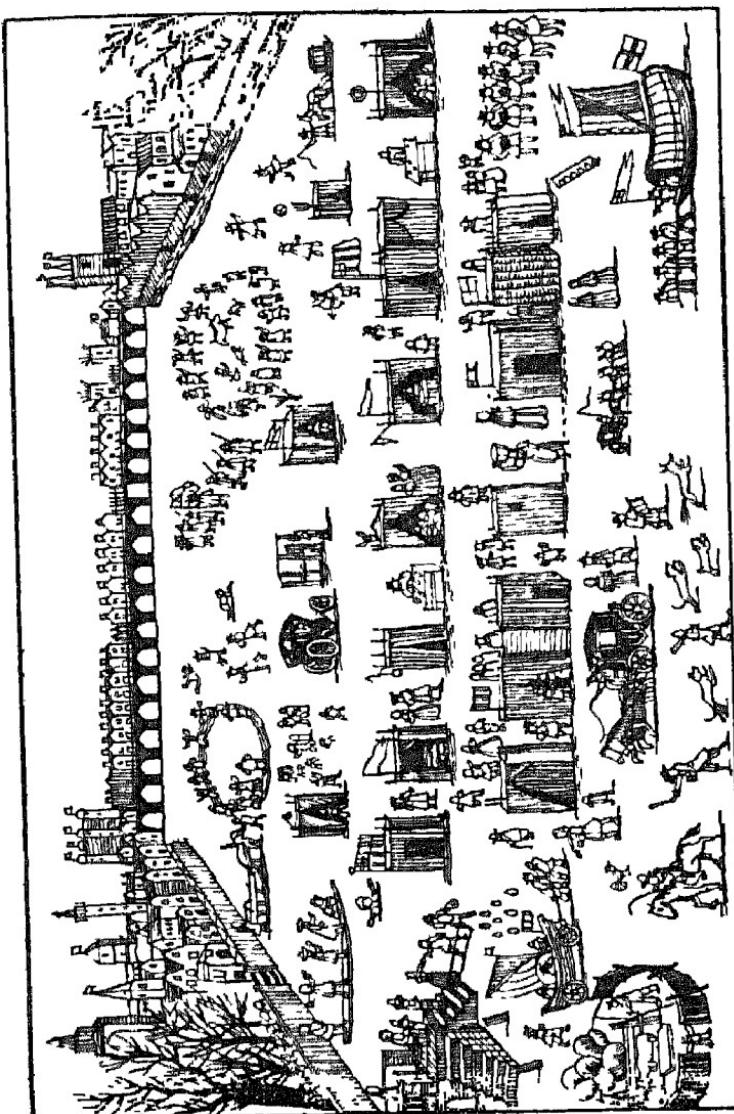


TOWNSMEN, 1636

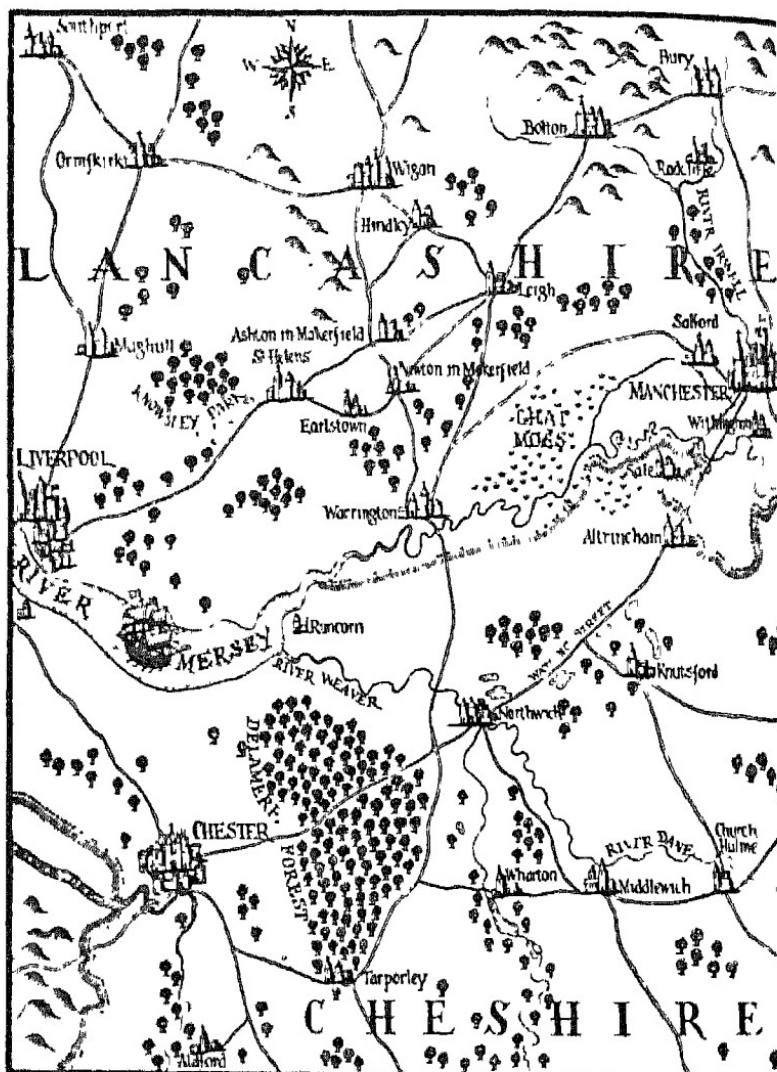
Notice that it is the women of this time who carry walking sticks. The man seems to be carrying the baggage slung on two sticks over his shoulders.

In January 1683, there was such a hard frost in this country and Europe that the Thames was completely frozen over. John Evelyn who lived at that time says in his diary "The Thames before London was still planted with booths in several streets, all sorts of tricks, shops ministered, and full of commodities, even to a printing press. Coal heaped to an iron, as in the streets, sleds, sliding with skates, a mad hunting horse and coach races, puppet-plays and interludes, &c. so that it seemed to be an annual on the water, whilst it was a severe judgment on the land, the trees not only splitting as if lightning struck, but men and cattle perishing in divers places, and the very seas so locked up with ice, that no vessels could stir out or come in."

FROST FAIR ON THE THAMES, 1683



LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE 150 YEARS AGO



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

COUNTRY LIFE A HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO

IN the reign of King George II, there lived in a beautiful house in Derbyshire, a little boy named Thomas William Coke. His home had rows of long windows, looking out upon a lovely garden. In the garden were ancient cedar trees and a walk which ran beside a river. Behind the house there was a park. Beyond the park lay a little village, of which Tom's father, Mr. Wenman Coke, was squire. Tom was the eldest of four children, two boys and two girls. When he was only a very little boy, he was sent to the village school. There he would learn to read and write and would play with the village boys, whose fathers worked on his father's land, as gardeners and grooms, shepherds or farmers.

Every autumn Tom's father went to London to sit in Parliament. Sometimes the children went too, rumbling over the rough roads in the great family coach. The house in which they lived when they were in London, looked out towards what is now Oxford Street. In those days, Oxford Street was not a great street of glittering shops crowded with shoppers and buses, but a road which led into the country. One day, when Tom was very small, he was called to his nursery window, and there below him in the road, was the flying form of a little red fox, and behind it the crying hounds and the huntsmen on their horses.

When he was only ten years old, Tom went away to school at Eton. He was a real country boy and he liked wandering in Windsor Park, and shooting snipe, better than doing his lessons. The cleverer boys sometimes prepared his work for him in return for the birds he brought them to cook for their supper. When he went home for his holidays he used to get up before sunrise. As soon as he was dressed he went along the corridors to the cool dairy, and coaxed a dairy-maid to give him a bowl of cream. Then he went to the kitchen, where the bread for the house was made. There were the tempting new loaves just out of the oven. Tom would break off the corner crusts, and make his breakfast of these soaked in cream. Then before the sun rose, out he would run and be away all day, rain or fine, until darkness began to fall on fields and woods. He grew up tall and strong and very handsome, with fair hair and bright eyes. He knew the ways of birds and animals, and he had shamed in the work of shepherds and ploughmen, of hedgers and ditchers.

Sometimes he heard his father speak of his great-aunt Margaret, Lady Leicester, who lived alone in a great house called Holkham Hall in Norfolk. He knew that when she died Holkham would belong to his father, and after that to him. He knew, too, that everyone was rather frightened of Lady Leicester. One day, when he was seventeen years old, he had a letter from her. She offered to pay for him to go and travel in France and Italy. She asked him to stay with her before he went.

It was a lovely summer afternoon when his coach came near to his great-aunt's house. As Tom looked round him, he saw a country very different from the green hills and the cornfields of his home. Before him on all sides was a sandy heath. Here and there were lonely, rather shabby cottages. Now and again he saw a field of rye, but it looked miserable and thin.

At last his coach turned in through the gates of a park. Here trees had been planted, but they were still very young. There were no flower beds, but in front of him a great new white brick house, with gilded window frames gleaming in the setting sun. When his coach drew up before the doors, numbers of footmen were waiting to receive him. He was shown into a large room to wait for his aunt. At last, folding doors were thrown open and a pretty little old lady in a lovely dress came in. This was his great-aunt Margaret. He soon found out why people were frightened of her. Though she was so small and looked so dainty, she was proud, very determined and very strict. She scolded him as if he were a little boy when he was late for meals.

After a month Tom went on his journey to Italy. He did not see Holkham Hall again for nearly five years. Then his great-aunt and his father had both died and he was squire of Holkham and all the



Woman's dress, about 1778.

desolate heaths, poor farms and miserable cottages for many miles around.

When he was still a boy, Thomas Coke had a friend called James Dutton, whose sister Jane he sometimes played with. As she grew up Tom thought she was a beautiful girl. Now they were married and were going to live at Holkham. When Jane told this to a friend who knew the country, she said, "Then, my dear, all you will see will be one blade of grass and two rabbits fighting for it." But Thomas and Jane Coke loved their new home. They were sure that they could make it beautiful, and find a way to turn the sandy heaths into rich corn land. They meant to have flocks of fine sheep, and herds of sleek cows, instead of the few long-legged bony animals they found there.

Squire Coke, as he now was, made his farm workers dig deep beneath the soil, till they came to clay and marl. This they spread on the fields, and soon it was possible to grow clover and grass, where there had been nothing but furze and heather before. Next, he bought good sheep and cows from other parts of England. He fed them on the clover so that they grew sturdy. The sheep had thick wool, and the cows gave good milk. He built comfortable cottages for the farmers, who were his tenants. Every year, at sheep-shearing time, he invited them all to Holkham Hall. He showed them his clean and airy cattle sheds, his wheat sown in straight lines instead of thrown broadcast about the fields, his fields of great turnips, growing in straight rows with plenty of space between, and his fine sheep and

A.D.
TO A.D.

AD



BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

UNION OF ENGLAND
AND SCOTLAND



AN EARLY GEORGIAN HOUSE



JETHRO TULL'S DRILL



KAY'S
FLYING SHUTTLE



A TEA CLIPPER

CLIVE IN INDIA

WOLFE TAKES QUEBEC

JOHN WESLEY
PREACHING



DRESS IN 1775

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



A SEDAN CHAIR



BATTLE OF THE NILE



AD 1815 - AD. 1860

AD



WATERLOO



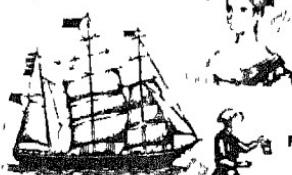
ELIZABETH FRY



A PEELER
OF 1829

A CHILD WORKER IN A COAL MINE -
FIRST FACTORY ACT

QUEEN VICTORIA IN 1837



FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

CRIMEAN WAR



RICKETT'S
STEAM ROAD-CARRIAGE

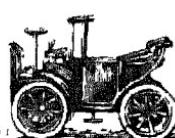
CHARLES DICKENS DIED



INVENTION OF THE
TELEPHONE



DEATH OF GENERAL GORDON



THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

cattle. He listened to all that they told him about what they did on their farms, and answered questions about his own. He gave prizes for the best sheep and lambs they could show, and for new farm instruments they had invented. He used to take the children round his farms, and explain everything to them, and encouraged them to discover for themselves what grasses grew best in the fields and gave the best food for the cows.

Soon, people from all over England came to see Thomas Coke's farms, and wondered to find the barren Norfolk country full of comfortable cottages, great fields of wheat, herds of fat cattle, and flocks of sheep. They found that all Mr. Coke's neighbours loved him, and spoke of him almost as though he was their father. They loved Mrs. Coke, too, and told of her kindness and courtesy to everyone around her.

While Mr. and Mrs. Coke were busy in this way, improving their lands and growing good food for the people in the towns of England, there lived in Northamptonshire, not more than eighty miles away, a boy named John Clare. His father was a farm labourer. He and Mrs. Clare and John, and John's little sister Sophy, lived in a stone cottage, with a deep thatched roof, in the village street of the village of Helpston. There were four rooms in the



Dressed to run, 1817.

cottage, two downstairs, and two upstairs. To go to bed at night, John and Sophy had to climb a ladder. The Clares were poor. Most likely, John's father did not earn more than 10s. a week. But they had a garden, with a lovely apple tree in it. They paid their rent by selling their apples.

John's father was a big strong man. His neighbours liked him. He was a fine wrestler, and he knew more than a hundred old songs and ballads, which he would sing at village feasts. He could read enough to read the Bible. John loved his mother very much. She could not read or write, but she loved her children, and cooked and mended and patched for them. She wanted John to be a good scholar. At first he went to a dame school in the village and learnt to read. When he was seven, he used to work for eight months in the year, tending the villagers' cows as they wandered on the heaths or along the grassy lanes, or helping his father with the threshing of the corn. With the money he earned in this way, he went to school with a wise, white-haired old schoolmaster in the village of Glinton, four miles away. But though John grew up to love books and when he was a man to write poetry, as a boy he loved the open air, the flowers and birds.

The country round his home, like the country round Holkham, had in those days great stretches of open heath. Here the poorest villager could keep a cow, which gave his family milk and butter. There were, too, great woods where the children could gather all the firewood needed for the cottage fires. Here the village boys wandered and played,

THOMAS COKE AND HIS SOUTH DOWNS SHEEP



You can see Holkham Hall in the distance.

fishing, looking for birds' nests and butterflies, and making houses for themselves amongst the trees. They loved the fun of the village feasts, Harvest Home, Martinmas and Christmas, and best of all, the week's holiday in May at "hiring time", when the farm labourers hired themselves to new masters for the coming year. Then there was racing and wrestling, and in the evening dancing to the tunes played by a wandering fiddler. There were stalls,



too, round the village cross, with barley sugar, candied lemon, toy horses on wheels, toy lambs with red necklaces and toy cuckoos.

James and Robert Adam were architects and furniture designers in the reign of George III. Their designs for furniture and houses were based on their study of Greek and Roman buildings, and are called Adamian in style.

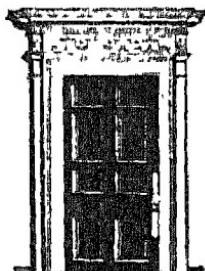
John's clothes were probably made of homespun, woven by a weaver in the village. His shoes were made for him by the village cobbler. His father's threshing flail was made and mended by the carpenter. The blacksmith

shod the farm horses, and mended the ploughs at his forge, where the flames leaped and the sparks shone in the dusk. John was a thin little boy, because he was often hungry and rather cold, but he was happy and free.

But squires and rich farmers all over England saw the work which Mr. Coke and men like him were doing, to make the land grow more wheat and the fields feed better sheep and cows. They thought it was good for England to be able to grow much more food, and they were right, for there were many people now living in towns who worked all day in

shops and banks, and workshops. These men, women and children needed food and clothes, and had no time to grow and make them for themselves. So it happened that all over England, rich men began to ask Parliament to let them "enclose" or put up fences round their fields and round large parts of the heath land. They cut down trees and grubbed up the furze bushes. They ploughed and manured the heaths and turned them into corn lands. They drained the marshes and turned them into deep meadows, to feed their cows and sheep. They grew rich, and built themselves comfortable brick houses. Their wives and daughters no longer worked in the dairies and the still rooms and looked after the calves and the chickens. The mother went out visiting her friends, and the daughters were sent to boarding schools, and were taught to play the piano, and do fine embroidery. But in one way they were not like Mr. Coke. They did not think about their poorer neighbours and the labourers on the farms. When they fenced in the commons, the villagers could no longer keep a cow or cut wood for firing. Some people who had lived on the commons for years, with a garden to grow vegetables and space for a few hens, were turned out of their homes because they could not show that they had any claim to them.

When he was sixteen, John Clare had gone away from home to find work. He came back two years



Down A, June 1790

later. Already the village was different. The hollow oaks where he had played were all cut down. The fields and heaths were ploughed up. Where he had found the earliest daisies in spring, and the finest blackberries in autumn, he now saw nothing but the rippling corn, safely fenced in by a hedge. But what was worse than all this, he found that the farmers wanted fewer labourers. Men and boys he had known always in the village, had to go away and wander in gangs from place to place, footsore and hungry, trying to find work. Soon, even the village weaver and the village carpenter had less work to do, for those who could afford it went to Peterborough or Stamford, where there were shops where they could buy coats and dresses, chairs and tables, and milking stools, ready made.

Such things were happening all over England, one hundred and fifty years ago. A man who travelled about in those days at first thought the countryside was much improved. Later, he went into the village inns and found the labourers, shabby and thin, sitting there all day because, however hard they worked, they could not earn enough money to feed and clothe their wives and children properly, or to put by for the time when they themselves were too old or too rheumatic to work. Unfortunately, the squires and farmers who so much admired and copied Mr. Coke's ways with his fields and animals, forgot to copy his ways with his men.

This is what Arthur Young says about the villages in 1801.

"Go to an alehouse kitchen . . . and there you

will see the origin of poverty . . . For whom are they to be sober? For whom are they to save? (Such are their questions.) . . . If I am diligent shall I have leave to build a cottage? If I am sober shall I have land for a cow? If I am frugal shall I have half an acre of potatoes? You offer no motives; you have nothing but a parish officer and a workhouse! Bring me another pot!"

If you live in a village, you should try to find out where the old un-enclosed cornfields lay, and where the common land was, and any old footpaths which have been closed. There may be someone in the village who has the charge of old maps. Perhaps you could get leave to look at them. In any case, you should ask the oldest people in the village to tell you anything they remember about old roads and footpaths and old field names, and see whether you can build up for yourself a map or plan of the old village, or even your neighbourhood in old days. Look at the plan on p. 134. This is taken from a modern map, but shows the way in which seventeenth-century map-makers used pictures. You might do the same.



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

CHILDREN ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO

IF you had been in a village or little town in Buckinghamshire or Bedfordshire, early in the morning, about one hundred and fifty years ago, you might have seen a number of women and girls hurrying to the inn. They would be carrying bundles, or neatly covered baskets. Perhaps you would guess that they had butter or bread or fruit in their baskets, but you would be wrong. They know that a lace-dealer has come to the town and is staying at the inn. They are taking the beautiful lace, which they have been busy making on their pillows for the last six months. They hope that he will buy it from them.

If you had been awake just before six o'clock in the morning, you would perhaps have heard the sound of hurrying feet in the street below your window, and children's voices calling to one another. Jump out of bed and peep through your curtains. There, in the early morning light, numbers of little girls—some of them twelve or thirteen, but some not more than four or five—are hurrying along. They wear shawls over their heads, and some of them have no stockings or shoes. Most of them look pale and their clothes are shabby. They are going to the lace schools, where they will work all day. The schools are kept by the village women in their cottages. If you look in at one of them you will

think the room is much too full of little girls. It is not very big, and there may be thirty children. They cannot get enough air to breathe. The light is bad so that the fine work makes their eyes ache. They work all day, from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock at night. They only stop for breakfast, dinner and tea, and perhaps for half an hour to learn to read a few verses from the Bible. Yet you would be surprised to see how quickly their fingers move, and how soon the lovely pattern of the lace grows upon the pillow.

They sing as they work:

"Nineteen miles to the Isle of Wight,
Can I get there by candle light?
Yes, if your fingers go lissom and light,
You'll get there by candle light."

As the evening falls, and the light grows dim in the cottage, one of the girls will light a tallow candle stuck in a socket in a round board or stool. Round the outer edge of the stool are thin glass bottles filled with water. These act like lenses, and throw the light of the candle very brightly on to the lace pillows of the little girls sitting on their stools round the candle board. It is six o'clock—time to go home. The sleepy children stretch and yawn and put their pillows away. If to-morrow is Saturday, they will only have to work till dinner time. In the afternoon they can play, if they are not too tired.

These little lace-makers were not the only children who worked when they were very young, when your great-great-great-grandmothers and grand-

fathers were children. In Yorkshire, little boys and girls of four or five years old helped their mothers and fathers to prepare the sheep's wool for weaving. When they were quite small, they learnt to wind the wool on to the bobbins for the weaver. When they could do this, they were taught to use the big spinning-wheel which stood in the corner of the kitchen. As they grew older still, they helped with the dyeing, and soon learnt to sit in the big weaving loom, working the treadles with their feet and, as soon as their arms and legs were long enough, throwing the shuttle.

In Essex and Hertfordshire, girls and boys who were not big enough to work in the harvest fields, learnt to make straw plait which was stitched into hats and bonnets for ladies. Everywhere, children worked in the fields, weeding, stone-picking, tending cows, and even driving great cart horses. Sometimes these children had to walk as much as seven or eight miles to the farm before work began at half-past eight. They were very tired when they set out for home again at half-past five in the evening. But at any rate the farm children worked in the open air. Perhaps the saddest little boys in England in those days were those hired out as chimney sweeps. Up before it was light, they must trot after their masters, carrying the big brushes to some great house. There they must get into the great fireplace, and climb up inside the chimney, sweeping as they went. The soot got into their eyes and hair. Their knees were raw with the rough bricks. Sometimes it was so dark that they lost their way in the chimney flues.

CHILDREN 150 YEARS AGO



There were boys and girls in Yorkshire, Lancashire and other parts of England who worked underground in the coal mines. Tiny children of five sat alone in the dark, opening and closing trap-doors which let the men and horses through the galleries. As soon as they were seven or eight years old, they began to work like little ponies; with a belt round their waists and a long chain, they crawled along the galleries, pulling trucks of coal through the wet galleries of the mine. No wonder they were small and pale and often ill.

All these children had to work, because their mothers and fathers were too poor to support them, unless they could earn money for themselves. But many people in those days thought it was much better for children to work than to go to school. Most of the time was spent in working, but there were free hours on Saturday and Sunday when the children could leap and run in the fields, and catch butterflies, as Clare did. There were village feasts and fairs, which you read about in the next chapter, with stalls of sweets and toys, wrestling and dancing, and perhaps a peep-show.

There were happy children, too, like the boy in the picture, who loved his country home and his grandfather, and loved the little school to which he went every day.

sent before he went to Eton. But some children, who did not need to earn their living when they were little, were almost as unhappy as the little chimney sweeps and the children in the mines. Little John Wesley was born in a rectory, in the village of Epworth in Lincolnshire. His mother and father loved their children, but they thought it was kind to be stern with them. They were taught that they must only eat a little, that they must cry quietly, and that if they were naughty they must expect to be beaten with a birch rod.

Antony Ashley Cooper was the eldest son of an earl. He and his three sisters were terribly afraid of their father and mother. It was a good thing for little Antony that he had an old nurse whom he loved dearly. When he was a grown man he used to say that she was the best friend he ever had. When he was seven years old, he had to say good-bye to her and go to school. It was a very big school. The classrooms and the bedrooms were dirty. The big boys bullied the little ones. Nobody looked after them when they were ill or miserable. Soon after Antony went to school, he heard that his dear old nurse had died. He cried at the thought of going home, and he cried again at the end of the holidays, at the thought of going back to school.

Perhaps it was partly because he was so unhappy as a little boy that Antony, when he had grown up and had become the Earl of Shaftesbury, spent most of his life trying to help unhappy children.



He tried to persuade Parliament to say that little boys were not to be made to climb chimneys, and sweep them. He did persuade it to make a law to say that children under nine were not to work in the new factories, of which you will read in the next chapter, and that girls were not to work in mines. He tried to prevent little boys and girls working in gangs in the fields, and he collected money to set up schools in London for poor children who had no homes, but slept under hedges, in sheds or carts—or even in a roller in Hyde Park.

Try to find out whether there were once cottage industries, such as lace-making, glove making, knitting or straw plaiting, in the place where you live, and if you can discover any of the old cottages or out-houses where they were carried on. There may be some old people in your town or village, whose mothers or fathers worked in these old industries when they were children, and told their children what they were like. I expect if you asked them they would tell you stories about those old days, and about their own childhood, when very likely they had to work at an age when you will still be at school.



1827



1841



1873

HAIRDRESSING

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

HOW THE TOWNS OF ENGLAND CHANGED WHEN QUEEN VICTORIA WAS A LITTLE GIRL

IN the days when Tom Coke was a boy, at the end of the reign of George II and the beginning of the reign of George III, the town in which you live probably looked very much the same as we saw it in chapter eight. There might be some new houses, with rows of long narrow windows. Their doors would have a little plaster canopy, looking something like the inside of a cockle-shell. They would be reached by a flight of steps from the street. Perhaps there would be a new Bank building, where people paid in their money, instead of keeping it in a strong box, or under a loose brick in their own homes. Here they could draw cheques to pay money to people in a distant town. There might be a new or larger inn, too, built round a central courtyard. Coaches and post-chaises were driven through a great covered gateway into the yard. There, horses were changed, and the chilled passengers got down to stretch their legs, or to eat their dinner by the roaring fire in the dining-room.

But the towns were hardly any bigger than they were four hundred years earlier. Most of the streets were still paved with cobble-stones. People still fetched their water from wells in the road, or even bought it from water carriers. At night they hung out lanterns, or set flares in brackets on their

railings to light the streets. The old watchmen still went their rounds, calling out the hours of the night and the state of the weather. In the evenings, and on Sundays and holidays, boys and girls could run out to the heaths and woods, only a little way from the town. In many houses, they could see green fields or commons from their attic windows.

There are still some of these pleasant old towns in England. Though they have grown a little and have more shops and perhaps a Picture House, they still have many of their old houses, their narrow streets and wide market places, and perhaps even some of their old coaching inns. Some of you may live in such a town and can make a plan of the old part. But even if you do, you are not likely to meet the old watchman, or to have to go into the street to draw your water, or to hang out a lantern at



AN OLD COACHING INN

night. More of you probably live in towns which look very different. They are very large, so that you can only get into the country by bus or train. In most of them there are rows and rows of houses, all very much alike, great factories and workshops or railway yards, blocks of flats perhaps, and many shops, some big and a great number of small ones.

Most of these big towns began to grow in the days of King George IV or King William IV, when Princess Victoria, who was to become Queen in 1837, when she was only eighteen years old, was living as a little girl in Kensington Palace. There were a good many different reasons why towns grew larger then. In the first place, doctors were beginning to know much more about how babies should be treated and how diseases may be cured. So it came about that not nearly so many little children died, and more people lived to be quite old. So there really were a great many more people living in Great Britain in the reign of King William IV than there were in the reign of King George I. Secondly, people such as James Watt the Scotsman, Richard Arkwright the barber, and George Stephenson the colliery engine fitter, were making great discoveries as to the power of steam and water, and how this power could be used to help men in their work. About the same time, Abraham Darby, the iron smelter, began to make far tougher iron by smelting it with coke instead of with coal. The railway engines which George Stephenson made could carry great machines to Yorkshire and Lancashire. But the machines were

too large, and too expensive, to put up in cottages, so they had to be set up in mills or factories, by men who had money to spend. Instead of being worked by a cottager and his wife and children in their spare time, they had to be minded and fed day and night by numbers of men, women and even children. All these people had to live near their work. So places such as Manchester, Leeds, Blackburn and Huddersfield, which had once been quite small, grew quickly.

The people who came to live in these new towns, came mostly from the country villages of which you read in chapter fifteen, where the landlords hedged in the commons, and where there was less work for the village labourers to do. When they could not get work, and when there was nowhere for them to walk or play in their spare time, and less weaving and carpentering and shoe-making to do in the villages, boys and girls found life dull and hard. Those who had a love of adventure, set off to seek their fortunes in the mills and factories.

Some people who were unhappy in their own countries, such as Irishmen and Jews from Europe, came to England, too, hoping to find work. So you see it was no wonder that little towns grew into big cities, and that some places which had been no more than big villages, soon became towns.

But where were all these people to live? Sometimes, people who had big houses belonging to them, let off each floor to a separate family. The poorest lived in the cellars. These were damp and dark, because they were below the level of the street. If

there were twenty or thirty people in the house, they all had to use the same staircase. Their boots were muddy or dusty when they came in from the unpaved streets outside. Sometimes no one troubled to

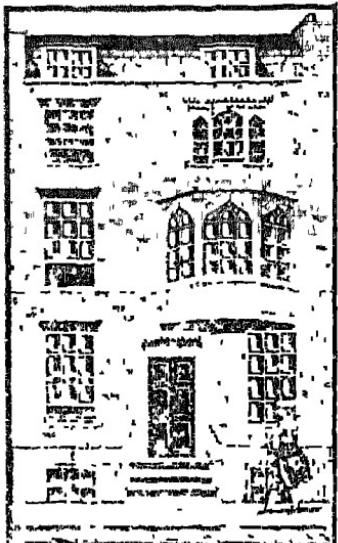
scrub the staircase, for they had enough to do to carry from the street pump the water they needed for their own cooking and washing. The stairs soon got worn. The dirt lurked in every hole and corner. They were used by so many people that they became airless, and the smell of the cooking and washing of so many families clung to them.

Some more fortunate people had new houses built for them. A man who wanted to make some money would buy up fields or a bit of common on the outside of the town. Sometimes he wanted to put as

1. GEORGIAN HOUSE

This is the house of a well-to-do man, possibly a banker or a merchant. The drawing room was probably the room on the first floor with the bay window. The cook and the housemaid and the page-boy if there was one, lived in the rooms below the street level and probably slept in the attics.

many houses on the land as he could, so that he might get rent from all of them. To do this he had to build them in straight rows, touching each other and without any garden or back yard. He found



it cost him less to make them all exactly alike, and he used as few bricks as he could, so that the walls were thin and let in the damp and the rain and the noise from the street and the neighbours.

As the towns grew larger and larger, the fields and the commons were built over. The first country people who came to live near the mills could walk in the lanes and on the heaths when their work was done. But, by the time their children were men and women, the streets of little brick or stone houses, with their slate roofs stretched for mile after mile. There were no walks left, and no one had thought of clearing any spaces for parks and playgrounds. No one spent money on building theatres, or clubs, or concert halls, and there were no picture houses in those days.

So men and women who had been used to the country, grew grey and bent and weary. Many of the women tried to keep their houses clean, and their children tidy, but it was hard work. Their backs and arms ached, and in the end, the floors still looked grey and grimy. If they opened their windows, horrible smells came in from the rubbish in the streets. If they kept them closed, the room was always full of the smells of cooking and washing. The masters who owned the mills had spent a great deal of money in buying them and putting in the machines. They thought they could not afford to pay very much in wages. So fathers came home on Friday night with not more than 12s. or 14s. Sometimes they only had a ticket to spend 14s. at a particular shop. It was a very expensive shop, and

often the things it sold were shoddy and not what the housewife wanted.

Sometimes the father would look at his children in their shabby clothes, and at their hungry eyes and thin faces. He might think, "Jimmie and Mary are only eight and six years old. They are very young to go to work. But it will be better to take them with me to the mill. They can earn 2s. or 3s. a week each. That will give us a little more food." So at five or six o'clock in the morning, Jimmie and Mary must be wakened; they must hurry out of bed and into their clothes. There is no time to wash properly, and no proper breakfast to eat. Out in the cold, wet morning they must run, while the great bell of the factory clangs out to call them to work. From six in the morning till half-past eight at night, they will toil in the hot damp mill, piecing the fine threads when they break, or crawling under the great machines to clean them. When they get home at night, they will be too tired to wash or eat any supper. They get into bed to fall asleep. So they live, day after day, and week after week, without holidays, or a sight of flowers and birds and running streams and lambs.

Not all towns or all masters were as bad as these, even when Princess Victoria was a little girl. At New Lanark in Scotland, a young man named Robert Owen bought a cotton mill. Round it he built comfortable cottages for his workers. He opened shops, where they could buy good food and clothes, at a price they could afford. He would not have any child under nine to work in his mills. He

opened airy, pleasant schools. In them he put teachers who knew that little children need to dance and play and sing, even more than they need to learn to read and write. He told his teachers to give lessons out of doors as much as they could, and to teach the children interesting things about birds, and flowers and animals. He loved the people who worked in his mills almost as though he was their father.



This is a horn book—the only kind of lesson book many children used in school. It consists of a page on which the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer are printed, mounted in a frame with a handle and covered with a piece of thin horn to keep it clean and tidy.

Other people, too, began to care about how workers lived in the new towns. The rich men, who owned nearly all the land in Huddersfield in Yorkshire, and Ashton-under-Lyne and Glossop in Derbyshire, would not sell their fields to builders. They chose men they could trust to build strong, comfortable houses in wide streets, with proper drains and plenty of open space between one street and the next.

Parliament, too, began to see that living in towns which were not properly looked after, was making people ill and miserable. In 1835, they passed a law which said that people were to choose their own Town Councils, and that these councils must see after the drains and the pavements and the lights in the streets, and might do other things to make their towns pleasanter places to live in if they wished.

We shall read about some of these things in chapter twenty.

Little by little, too, work-people began to help themselves. They formed Clubs and Societies, and hired a hall, or had one built out of their subscriptions. Here they soon collected a library of books. They had discussions. They asked men to come to talk to them about foreign lands, or the stars, or the rocks. They had games, too, such as bagatelle or billiards, as well as cricket on the green.

If you live in a town, try to find out the oldest factory in it. Look at the streets near by, and notice if they are different from the newer factories and streets. Is there a park near? If so, when was it made and who made it? Think of the little children who worked in the old factories and lived in the old streets a hundred years ago.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL CHILDREN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

WHEN Richard Hakluyt was young and went to Westminster School, probably some of his school-fellows were quite poor boys. At other great schools, too, such as Eton and Harrow, St. Paul's School in London, and also in the grammar schools in many towns and villages, merchants' sons and carpenters' sons, squires' sons and farmers' sons sat side by side in the big class room. Two hundred years later, when Tom Coke went to Eton, only the sons of richer men went to these schools, for the boys had to spend a great deal of money upon their clothes and their food and their amusements. They learnt a good deal of Latin and perhaps some Greek, and when they were about fifteen, they probably left school and went to Oxford or Cambridge.

But though boys like John Clare could no longer go to Eton or Harrow, a great many of them did go to school. So also did their sisters. In the villages, and the quickly growing towns of England and Wales, there were many Dame Schools. These were kept by old ladies, or by men who, because they were blind or lame, could not do any other work. The children had to pay 4d. a week for their schooling. There were no proper schoolrooms, but the boys and girls, perhaps thirty or forty of them, used to crowd into the kitchen of the cottage. There

would be much pushing and laughing and talking, and perhaps the Dame would have to whip some of the children with her birch rod.

At last, all would be settled upon their stools or forms, with their slates and pencils. Then the Dame would hear them say the alphabet and spell a few words all together. By and by, perhaps she would have to stop to stir the pot in which her dinner was simmering over the fire, or to turn the handle of her mangle. When she came back, and the children were once more quiet, she heard the older scholars read a few verses from the Bible, and taught the little girls to sew long seams or to embroider their names and texts from the Bible on fine canvas.

In the afternoon the kitchen would be very hot with so many children in it. Then, few lessons would be learnt. The little boys and girls would slip on to



A DAME SCHOOL

the floor, and the bigger ones lie along the benches, and soon most of the children, and perhaps the old dame herself, would be asleep. There were no terms and holidays. Children went to school when there was no work for them to do helping in the fields or with the spinning or weaving at home.

Some children went to schools where they were taught a trade. There were the lace-making schools, of which you read in chapter sixteen, the knitting schools and glove-making schools. Most of these were held in cottage kitchens and out-houses. For many hours a day the children worked at their lace pillows or their knitting frames, in the hot dark room, but sometimes, for an hour or two, the mistress of the school would teach the little girls to read their Bibles and to sew. Their mothers did not care very much about this. They thought it was more important that Hester and Caroline and Jane should learn to work quickly on the knitting-frame, and so earn more money to help to feed their little brothers and sisters.

John Clare was a fortunate boy. When he was seven years old, he left the Dame School in his own village and went, you remember, to a school at Glinton. This school was held in the vestry of the parish church. It was kept by a white-haired man called Mr. Seaton. He was old, but he knew a great deal. John sometimes, at first, played truant and rambled in the fields, or went fishing or butterfly hunting, instead of going to school. But his master soon made him interested in his books. Before he was twelve years old, he could say whole chapters

from the beautiful poetry of the Bible by heart. He learned to do difficult sums, too. When he was twelve his master died, and John had to work on the farms, but he still went to school at Glinton in the evenings after work, and he began to try to write poetry.

Another boy who went to one of these better schools was Robert Owen, of whom you read in chapter seventeen. He was so bright that, when he was seven, his master asked his father to let him help to teach the other children. After that, Robert did not learn much at school himself. Fortunately his father and his friends had plenty of books, and he learnt by reading at home. When he was ten years old, he was allowed to leave school and to go far away from home, to serve in a draper's shop in Stamford.

You remember how, when he was grown up, Robert Owen opened a school for little children near his mills at New Lanark. About the same time, other rich people in England began to think that there were not nearly enough schools, and that the children who went to them were not learning enough. They gave money, and began to open schools in towns and villages all over England. They did not think so much about making children strong and happy, as Robert Owen did. They wanted them to be tidy and well behaved, to learn to read and write and to do sums, and perhaps to know the names of the chief cities and rivers of Europe and such things. They thought it would be a good plan to have very large schools.

If you had been in Manchester about that time, you might have seen a thousand children, most of them tidy and clean, going to one of these schools. Let us imagine that we can talk to one of them. He will tell us that there is one big room in the school. If we say to him, "How many masters have you?" he will tell us, "Why, two, of course." "But how can two masters possibly teach a thousand or even a hundred children?" "They don't," he would reply. "They teach the monitors, and the monitors teach us." "Who are the monitors?" "Why, they are bright boys chosen out of every form to teach the others—and then there is the Monitor General, who starts the lessons for the whole school."

Perhaps we had better follow the children into school to see what is happening. When we first open the door we shall feel confused by the noise of shuffling feet. There are no cloak-room pegs. The boys are going straight to their seats. Soon we shall see that the great room has a platform at one end. On the platform is the master's desk. There are eight classes. Each class sits on a different form, or at different rows of small desks. Some of the boys are wearing little coats, cut short in front and with long tails behind. Others have long pinafores over their coats. All are wearing their hats. Several of the boys wear medals. These are the monitors.

One boy of about thirteen is standing on a stool in front of the master's desk. He is the General Monitor of Order. When all the others are in their places, he shouts out, "Sling hats!" and all the boys

take off their high-crowned hats, which have a band of elastic passing under their chins. They put the elastic round their necks, so that the hat hangs down behind. In this way they wear them until it is time to go home. When the monitor cries out, "Lift desks!" every boy raises the sloping desk in front of him. At the word, "Sit!" they all sit down.

When they are all seated, and the monitors are standing at the ends of the forms to see that everyone is behaving, the master reads a chapter from the Bible. After this lessons begin. The first lesson for every form is writing, the second is reading, and the third is arithmetic. The boys do their writing and arithmetic on slates. There is a monitor for each subject. He teaches the lesson he has just been taught by the master. Some of these little monitors are only seven years old. Most likely none of them is more than thirteen. They have not only to teach the other boys in their form, but also to see that they are clean and that they behave well. No boy is birched in this school. If the Monitor of Order sees that any boy has a dirty face, he is washed before the whole school. If anyone is idle or disorderly, the monitor may hang a disgrace mark around his neck. If he is still naughty he will be sent to the master's desk, and kept in for half-an-hour. Good boys, or boys who work very well, have a merit mark given them. If a boy who was to be kept in has a merit mark for another lesson, he can use it to buy off his staying in. At the end of a month, each boy's merit marks are counted. Each one is worth half a farthing, and for the money earned in this way, the

schoolmaster will give the boy a book, or a pair of stockings, or a shirt or perhaps a coat.

In the afternoon the children will come back to school and learn reading, writing and arithmetic again. The only book in the school is the Bible. All the other lessons are learnt from large cards hanging on the walls. Sometimes the classes all leave their seats and stand round in circles near the wall for reading or arithmetic. As they move across the room, and as they leave school at dinner time, or at the end of the afternoon, they have to say the multiplication tables. Most of the boys learn very slowly in this way. Many of them can only read and write easy words when they leave school and go to work. Some of the bright boys, who get into the eighth class, have lessons in geography and natural history from the master.

There was no law in England at that time to say that children must go to school, or how long they must stay there. Some mothers and fathers were too poor and too tired to care whether their children had any schooling. But some cared very much. They used to meet and discuss what kind of schools they would really like their children to have. Many of them wanted schools for the little ones, like the New Lanark school. They wanted all the children, little and big, to be taught by men and women who had learnt how to teach, instead of by the little monitors.

When Princess Victoria had become Queen, some of these parents had the courage to draw up a letter to her, asking for these things. For a long time

the men who governed England did not take very much notice of what the workers wanted. They granted some money to help schools, such as those you have just been reading about, but they did not say that there must be enough schools for all the children in every town and village. At last, in the year 1870, Parliament said that there must be enough for all children. Ten years later they said that all children must go to school, and, soon after, that no one need pay to go to school.

If you live in a town, see whether you can discover its oldest school building. It may have on it the date when it was built. Perhaps it is no longer used as a school. If it is not, try to think for yourself what may be the reason. Do you think it would be a pleasant building for a school?



Roller-skating in 1876.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

MOST likely, all the children who read this book are taller and heavier than most children of the same age a hundred years ago. That is partly because we know a great deal more than our great-grandfathers and grandmothers did about what makes children grow tall and strong and healthy. It is partly because we care about health much more than they did. If you have read the last four chapters carefully, you will be able to think of quite a number of reasons why many boys and girls in England in those days were small and pale. They often had terrible illnesses, such as cholera or smallpox, which few people in this country have to-day. Many children died very young; others lived to grow up, but they had bent backs, or bowed legs, or one shoulder higher than the other, and were never really well. Why was this?

One reason was that a great many children, both in town and country villages, began to work long before they should have done. The kind of work they did was very bad for them. Think of the little girls straining their eyes in the dark and stuffy lace-schools. Think of the six-year-old "climbing boys" who swept the chimneys. Remember the tiny boys and girls who sat all day in the dark mine galleries, opening and shutting the trapdoors, and those older ones who dragged the heavy coal trucks through the damp passages. Remember, too, the

little boys and girls of five, six, or seven years old, who had to work in the cotton mills from six o'clock in the morning till half-past eight at night. The work which these children did, pushed their left shoulders up, and made their right legs bend inwards. The boys and girls of eight or nine years old who worked in the fields, were not quite so badly off. At least they had fresh air and sunshine. But even they had not enough time for play. Often they were too poor to have enough to eat. You remember that sometimes they had to walk eight or nine miles to their work, and back again in the evening. Is it any wonder that nearly all these children were white-faced and heavy-eyed, and small?

But the children who lived in large towns had even worse things to bear than heavy work. You remember that when mills and factories were built, many people came to live near them, and there were not enough houses. So it came about that a great many people lived in one house, and had not enough fresh air to breathe, or that new houses were built which were much too small, and which had thin walls which let in the damp. You remember, too, that there was no one to make people who owned houses put water pipes in them. No one bothered to make proper drains. There were no dustbins or dustmen. People threw their rubbish—cabbage stalks and bones, and stale bread and many other things—into the streets. These rubbish heaps bred numbers of flies. The flies settled on the food. Then the food went bad.

Because there were no water-taps in the houses, it was very difficult for people to wash themselves or their floors or their clothes properly. They had not enough water to drink to keep them well. Sometimes a queue of twenty or thirty people waited to get water from one pump. They had been working hard all day. It was perhaps hot, or cold, or raining. No wonder they quarrelled and pushed and shouted, and the weakest went home with their kettles or buckets unfilled.

There was another reason, too, why the town houses of those days were unhealthy. People—even doctors—were afraid of fresh air. Many houses had very few and very small windows. Even these were hardly ever opened. It is said that one doctor, who was wiser than the rest, used to break one or two window-panes when he was first called in to see a patient. When the patient was better, the doctor gave him the money to have his window mended. I expect he told him to keep it open in future, lest he should fall ill again.

But while some people had too little fresh air, others had too much. There was the boy who slept in the roller in Hyde Park, and many others who had no homes but railway arches or empty carts. Such children had not enough clothes. They hardly ever wore shoes and stockings. Some boys had no coats, others no shirts. Children who came from homes where there was plenty of money were no better off, in a different way, for they wore too many clothes. Little girls wore several petticoats. Boys, even in hot weather, wore thick cloth suits and

mustlers. No mother would let her children go out without hats.

One of the first people to help children to be healthier and happier was, you remember, Robert



Bradford in the early nineteenth century.

Owen. Other mill-owners and some clergymen in Manchester and Leeds tried to help, too. They told members of Parliament of the sad sights they saw in the factories. They wrote to the newspapers, and, as more people began to hear about these things, they determined to put them right. Lord Shaftesbury and other members of Parliament, helped to pass laws to prevent little children working in the mills. Parliament said, too, that the mills must be kept clean and the great machines must be fenced round to prevent accidents. After a long time, master sweeps were forbidden to send little boys up the chimneys. But it was not until 1918, that all boys and girls had to stay at school until they were fourteen, and were not allowed to go to work during school hours.

Sometimes when the people who lived in the poor and crowded streets of a city caught smallpox or cholera, these terrible illnesses spread to other parts of the town. This made people frightened. They began to ask what caused such diseases. Some men in London were made responsible for trying to make England a healthier place. They were called the Central Board of Health. They had to see that there were people in every large town, and even in smaller towns where a great many people died every year, to make and improve the drains and the water supply, to see that the streets were properly swept and the rubbish carried away. In some towns the people began to do these things gladly. In Liverpool and Leeds and Bolton, public baths were built. Here, people who had no water taps in their houses could come to wash their clothes, and have hot or cold baths for 1d. or 2d. each. In Derby and Preston and Birkenhead, public parks were opened. Here people could walk and play in their spare time.

But in some towns, some people tried to prevent these good things. They said they cost a great deal of money and they could not afford to help to pay for such things. This was both selfish and foolish. It was selfish because they were refusing to help their poorer neighbours. It was foolish because their work people could not work really well as long as they were not healthy, and also because the diseases which the poorer people had were often caught from them by the richer people. To-day we know that it matters to all of us to have healthy and pleasant towns and villages, with good water,

plenty of parks, and recreation grounds and swimming baths.

Slowly then, towns became pleasanter and healthier, but many children still came to school with white faces. Some always had colds. Some had toothache. Some seemed always too tired to do their lessons, or fell asleep in their desks, or even fainted. These things troubled the men and women who had to teach them, and the inspectors who came to see how they were getting on with their work. Again, people began to wonder why these things should be. They came to the conclusion that it was because when mothers and fathers were out of work, or only earned very little, they could not afford to take the children to the doctor or dentist, or even to give them enough to eat. So it came about that a few years after Queen Victoria died, doctors were appointed in every big town and every county, specially to see after school children.

These are the doctors who now come to schools every now and then, to examine every child, and to advise and help their mothers and fathers about how to keep them well, or what to do for them if they are short-sighted, or have decayed teeth, or unhealthy tonsils or such things. The children who could not work because they came hungry to school, were helped, too, by the provision of milk in the middle of the morning, and good school dinners for those who, for any reason, could not get them at home. The doctors who came to examine the children, and the teachers in the schools, were pleased to see boys and girls growing stronger. But they found some

who might have been much stronger if they had been properly fed and clothed when they were babies.

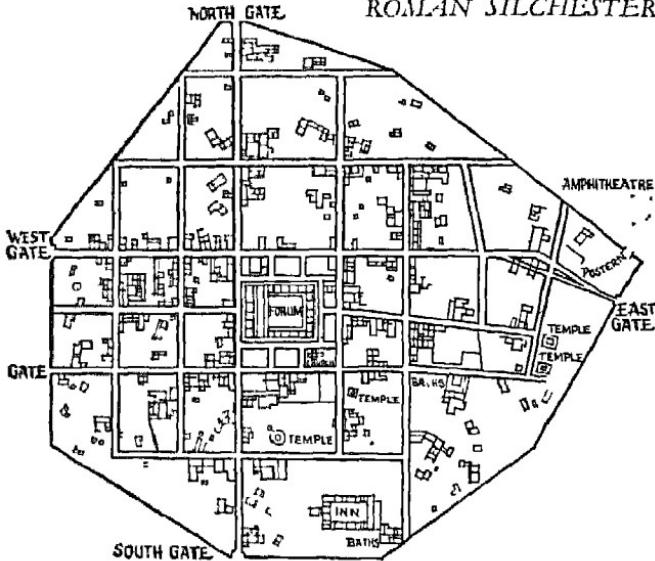
This made people think of a new plan. Rooms were hired, to which, once or twice a week, mothers might bring their babies. The mothers had tea, and people who understood such things talked to them about what it was best for babies to wear. They sold them good baby foods, and wool for knitting, and they had a weighing-machine and kept a record of whether the babies were gaining in weight each week as they should. The mothers were so pleased, and the babies improved so much in health, that soon doctors and nurses were asked to come regularly to these "Welfare Centres" as they were called. Now, nearly every town and a great many villages have their Welfare Centres or Babies' Clinics.

While all these things were happening in towns and villages and schools, doctors were discovering more and more about how our bodies and minds work and what they need. Some of their discoveries, about the need for fresh air and plenty of sleep, the best kinds of food to eat, and the importance of keeping food very fresh and clean, are taught to children in schools. In London we now have a Minister of Health, whose work it is to see that there are enough healthy houses for people to live in, that towns are kept clean and that food and milk are pure.

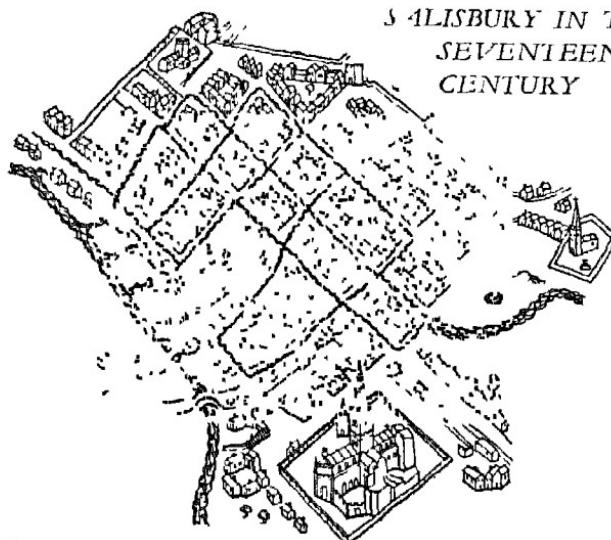


The corset, 1810.

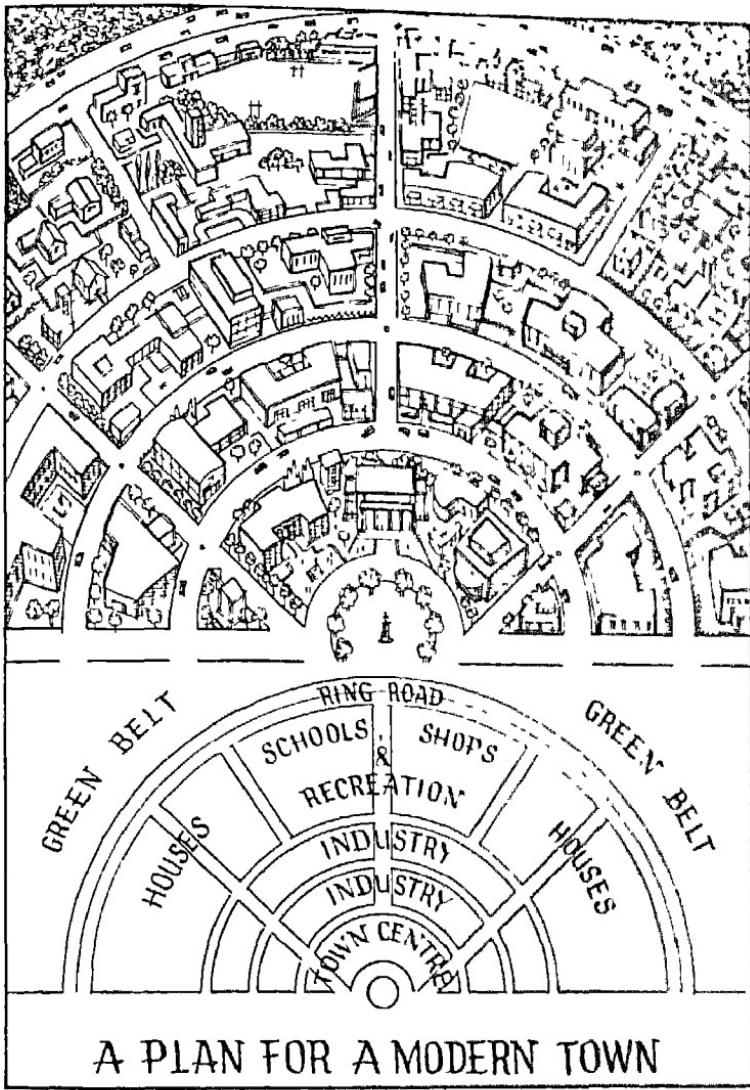
ROMAN SILCHESTER



SALISBURY IN THE
SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY



Notice that in both Silchester and Salisbury the roads are arranged in squares so that there is plenty of room for gardens and fresh air between one row of houses and the next.



A small town or a neighbourhood Unit which would form one district within a larger town

CHAPTER TWENTY

SOME THINGS OUR COUNTY COUNCILS DO FOR US

SOMETIMES when I walk on the country roads near my home I meet a little old man I know. He is a kind and happy little man and always has a joke for the children on their way to school. Often, as I pass him, he is singing some old hymn tune in a loud clear voice. His work is to keep the roads tidy—to sweep up the leaves, and trim the verges, to gather up dead branches after a storm, and in the winter to clear the snow away when it begins to thaw. He has a little white cart which he pushes along. Into the cart he puts all the rubbish he collects. If I look at the cart I can see three black letters on it—N.C.C. They stand for Norfolk County Council.

All of us live in Counties—Somerset and Devon, Norfolk and Surrey, Staffordshire and Rutland are all counties. Those of us who live in cities in which there are more than seventy-five thousand people, may find that our city or borough is a county—and is called a County Borough. In each county there are county offices in the biggest town. Sometimes they are in a big building specially built for the purpose, sometimes in a number of buildings. Here a great deal of business is done, and the meetings of the men and women who have been chosen to look after the county are held. We call these men and women the County Council. So you see, the cart

which my little old friend wheels about our village roads belongs to the County Council of Norfolk, which meets from time to time in Norwich.

The men and women who come to the meetings of the County Council, in their cars or by bus or train, live in many different parts of the county. It takes many of them an hour or two to get to the meetings. The meetings themselves take a long time. Some of the people are busy, with houses and children and shops or businesses to look after, but because they love their county, and are eager to see it well cared for, they give their time without grudging. When they first become County Councillors they may say which of the things the county needs they are most interested in, for the Council is divided into different committees. If Mrs. Ash cares about children and schools, she can be a member of the Education Committee. Colonel Brown is a great gardener. He will choose the Parks Committee. Mr. Fuller may be a keen motorist and choose to be on the Highways Committee. Other people are on the Public Health Committee, or the Library Committee.

Let us think about some of the things the people on these committees do for you, although perhaps they have never seen you. Well, first of all, the Education Committee is most likely in charge of your school, though there are some schools in England which do not belong to the County Councils. But if your school does belong to them, they choose your teachers, they see that you have fine airy buildings, comfortable desks, bright pictures and good playgrounds, and a well-cooked dinner in an airy

dining-hall. They may have said that you can have a wireless set, a hall with a stage and curtains for plays and concerts, and good pianos for dancing and singing, an epidiascope to throw pictures on a screen for you, and a library of books in a special room or in your class-rooms. Every now and then the doctor and the nurse or the dentist will come to school. They will see that you are growing up well and strong, able to hear and see and breathe well, and with good sound teeth to bite and chew your food. They will advise your mother or father if you need glasses, or exercises to keep your back or legs straight, or if there is anything about which you should go to the hospital for treatment. They, too, are sent by the County Council, for they work partly for the Education Committee and partly for the Public Health Committee.

Suppose that you want to make a model of an aerodrome or a coal mine, or to get up a play with dresses belonging to the days of Queen Elizabeth or Queen Anne. Perhaps you will want to look at books to find out how to do some part. If you have not got the book you want at school or at home the County Council will help you again. If you live in a town you can go to the Public Library and ask for the book you want, and perhaps go to the Museum to look at a model of an old dress or bit of armour there. If you live in the country, and tell your teacher what you need, he or she will send the name of the book you want to the County Library and it will be sent to your school in the library box. Nearly all Public Libraries and Museums are kept

going by the Library and Museums Committee of the County Council.

Now let us come out of school and run home along the firm clean road. You remember that my old friend had N.C.C. on his little white cart, and we said that stood for Norfolk County Council. Well, nearly all roads are made and repaired, swept and cleaned, and lighted by the Highways Committees of the County Councils. Now perhaps our shortest way home is through the park, with the gay flowers and green lawns and flowering trees and shrubs, the tennis courts and bowling green for the older people, and the paddling pool, and sand heap, and giant's stride for the children. If we look at the notice board at the gate we shall find it is headed: COUNTY COUNCIL OF — or COUNTY BOROUGH OF — So all these things, too, are cared for by another committee of our County Council.

We may pass a pretty bright group of houses. Arranged sensibly, too, in a crescent quite off the main road, so that children are safe from traffic. The houses have pleasant gardens, and plenty of large windows, a bath with hot and cold water, and roomy cupboards. It is quite likely that they were built by men working for the Housing Committee of the County Council. If you have a half-holiday perhaps you can go and swim at the public baths or in the swimming-pool. Those were made by the Baths and Washhouses Committee of the Council.

Do you remember that we said in chapter nineteen, that about thirty or forty years ago people started Welfare Centres, to which mothers might take their

babies to be weighed and looked after? Very likely you were taken to one every week when you were a baby. That, too, is now provided by a committee of the County Council. Perhaps when you were two or three years old, and still too young to go to the primary school, your mother took you every day to the nursery school. Can you, I wonder, remember the big airy rooms, the little basins fixed low down so that you could reach to wash your hands and clean your teeth? Do you remember how, before you could read, you knew your own tooth brush and towel and peg by the special pictures they all had stuck upon them? What lovely big solid toys there were to play with, too, and how soon you began to enjoy getting out your own special hammock-bed after dinner and sleeping for an hour, as all toddlers should. I don't suppose you knew in those days that it was the Education Committee of the County Council which saw that you had that pleasant nursery, and chose the nurses and superintendent who looked after you.

But my little old friend who sweeps the road, and all other road men and bath attendants, teachers, and doctors and nurses and librarians, must be paid for the work they do, or they cannot live. Plants and trees, books and desks, lawn tennis nets, rollers and mowing machines, school pictures and cupboards and witless sets cost money, too. Where is it all to come from? The men and women on the Committees could not pay for all these things for us, could they? The answer is that your mothers and fathers and all other grown-up people, who

live or have shops and land in your county or county borough, each of them pay a little. When so many people each give a little, no one has to give a very great deal. We call the money that people pay to their County Councils, the rates. How much each person pays depends upon the value of his house or shop or farm or field. This is reckoned in rather a difficult way, which you will understand when you are older.

Sometimes people grumble about paying rates, but that is rather foolish, is it not? For we cannot have pleasant and healthy towns and villages for nothing; and if we say "I have a garden of my own so I don't need a park", or "I don't care for reading or swimming", or whatever it may be, "so I don't see why I should pay for these things for other people", that is surely selfish and stupid; for if your neighbours are not well and happy, I don't see how you can really be happy yourself. You will surely feel happier if your neighbours have bright eyes and smiling faces than if they look thin and pinched and ill and poor, as so many people did when Lord Shaftesbury was alive.

Of course, your mother and father may think that the men and women on the County Council don't spend the rates well. Perhaps there are things which they would like their town or village or their children to have which the Council does not provide. Perhaps the schools are not bright and airy and well furnished, or there are not enough playing-fields and parks and libraries. Or they may think they are spending money foolishly, making very grand halls

for their own meetings, or running omnibuses for school children who would be very much better if they walked or cycled to school. But your mothers and fathers vote for the members of the County Council, just as you vote for the members of your cricket committee or dramatic club committee, and you know what you would do next term if the children you had voted for this term didn't do their work, or wasted the money you had paid in subscriptions!

We should remember, too, that all these things—school books, desks, and flowers and trees and roads—belong to all of us, because we are all citizens of our county, or shall be when we are grown up. That means, does it not, that we should all be proud of them, and take care of them? We should be careful to see that we neither lose nor spoil them, nor make them untidy and dirty ourselves, and that if we see anyone else mis-handling them in any way, we should explain to him that he is spoiling something which belongs both to him and to all his friends and neighbours.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

NEAR NEIGHBOURS OF ENGLAND

LOOK at a map of the British Isles which is coloured so as to show the high lands and the low lands. You will see that all the northern part of Scotland and a large part of Wales is a much darker brown than any part of England. You know that this means that in these countries there are high hills and even mountains. To-day, firm roads lead over many of the hills, and there are neat farmhouses and flocks of sheep and cattle on the high moors and fells. But even to-day, when the clouds come down upon the mountains, it is easy for a traveller to lose himself, and if snowstorms come early in autumn or late in the spring, when the farmers are not expecting them, sheep may get buried in the drifts and have to stay beneath the snow until the shepherd can get to them to dig them out.

In the days when such people as Maximus and Branwen were alive, there were no roads across these mountains and moors, only the tracks worn by the feet of men carrying their wares to market over the hill-tops, or going to worship their gods in some great temple of standing stones. The country was wild and desolate, so it came about that the Roman soldiers never conquered it farther north than the Great Wall, of which you read in chapter three. Nor did they really conquer Wales, though they made some roads and camps there. Neither did they ever take ship and cross the stormy sea which separates

Wales from Ireland. The Angles and Saxons, too, failed to drive the Britons out of those mountainous lands, and though the Normans landed in Ireland, and burnt and plundered and built towns for themselves, they never conquered it. This is why there are men, women and children in the Highlands of Scotland, in Wales, and in some parts of Ireland who speak languages which are like the languages spoken in Britain before the Romans came. We call these languages Gaelic, Welsh and Erse.

But what Roman soldiers, or English and Danish pirates could not do, Christian saints and missionaries did. A young Briton named Patrick, who had once been a slave in Ireland, escaped and went to France. There he learnt to be a Christian, in the same great monastery in which St. Benet was later taught. He went back to Ireland, where he had once been kept as a slave, and wandered over the blue hills and green valleys telling the grey-eyed, dark-haired men and women tales of the love of Jesus Christ for men. He sang, as he went, a song which we still sing sometimes. It is called St. Patrick's Breastplate:

I bind unto myself to-day
The virtues of the starlit heaven,
The glorious sun's life-giving ray,
The whiteness of the moon at even,
The flashing of the lightning fire,
The whistling wind's tempestuous shocks,
The stable earth, the deep salt sea,
Around the old eternal rocks.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ beside me, Christ upon me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Thus he sang, as he braved the loneliness of moor and mountain and the unfriendly looks of wild and heathen men. He found that the Irish lived in clans or families—grandfather, perhaps great-grandfather, fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles and cousins, forming one big clan, and all living near one another and owning a great stretch of land between them. Those of them who, when they heard Patrick's message, specially wanted to give their lives to worship God, would build themselves little groups of huts of turf or unhewn stone, with one bigger hut for a church. There they would live as monks, spending their time in praising God and in getting such learning as they could. From Ireland, two hundred years later, missionaries set out again to bring the story of Christianity back to Scotland and northern England. These Irish monks built monasteries on the Island of Iona, and on Holy Island, and wandered over the Pennine Hills, as you have read in chapter four.

When the English and Danish people in England were learning more and more, in the ninth and tenth centuries, to obey one king and to have one law for all the land, the British or Celtic people in Ireland and northern Scotland and in Wales still lived in

clans. The Welsh had 'princes' and the Irish had kings, but the people really only cared about their own clan and its chieftain. If one member of a clan was hurt by a neighbour from another clan, all his cousins would march out to avenge his wrong. If a prince wanted to punish a band of robbers, he could only do it by going against them with his fighting men.

But though their lives seemed lawless, they loved poetry and music. Men of many different clans would meet each year, wandering many miles over hill and dale, to hear the bards sing the adventures of saints and heroes and great lovers. In the monasteries of Ireland, too, there was much learning, so that Irish scholars were sent for to teach in schools across the seas, in the land we call France.

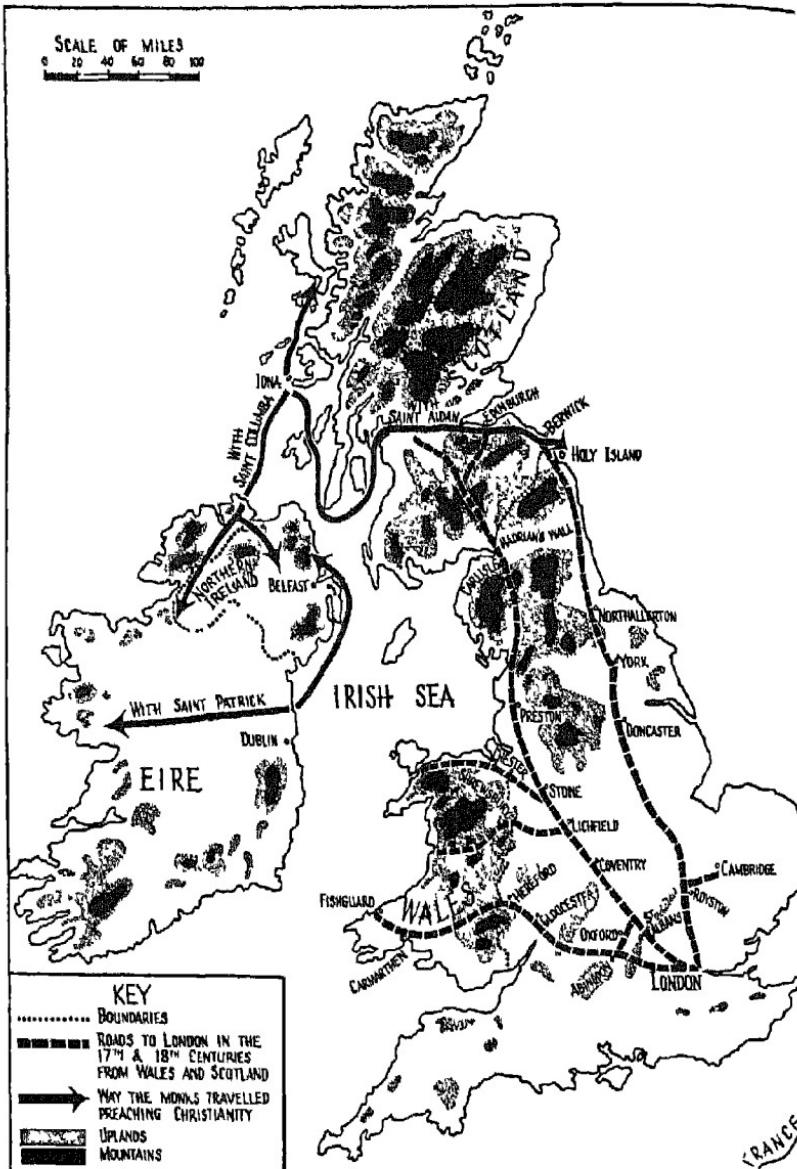
Later, when English kings such as Henry II and Edward I were trying to make all Englishmen keep the peace, and were even setting constables and justices to keep order in towns and villages and sending their own judges from time to time round the country to try robbers and murderers, it seemed to them unwise to leave men to live such lawless lives just beyond the borders of their own kingdom. Henry II tried to conquer Ireland, and Edward I tried to conquer Wales and Scotland. They said they wanted to stop men stealing corn and cattle and fighting and killing each other. But Irishmen and Scots and Welshmen loved their own ways—their own tongue, their own songs and tales and customs. They would rather be robbed and hurt by men of their own race than have order kept for them by

strangers. They did not want to learn to speak the strange English tongue.

So it came about that in Wales Llewellyn ap Gruffydd, and in Scotland William Wallace and Robert Bruce, found stout hearts and willing hands ready to fight against the English knights and bowmen. It was not until the days of Henry VIII that Wales was really conquered; and Scotland kept her own kings until James VI of Scotland became James I of England, in 1603. Even then, Welshmen and Scots did not like Englishmen very much, but after a time they found that it was a good thing for the whole of this little island to have one king and similar laws. When men from Scotland could bring their fish and cattle, and men from Wales their sheep and wool, to sell in English towns, they began to grow rich. When Welsh boys began to go to college in Oxford or Cambridge, their manners grew less shy and wild. When Scottish ladies sometimes made the long journey, by post-chaise or by coach, to London, they learned to drink tea and to wear fashionable dresses trimmed with lace and ribbon.

The Celtic Scotsmen in the Highlands still hated the English and threatened to choose a separate king for themselves. But, little by little, even they began to see that this island is too small to have two kings, or even two parliaments. In 1707, the Scots gave up having their own parliament in Edinburgh. Scotsmen and Welshmen now sit in the English House of Commons. There have been great Scottish and Welsh Prime Ministers of England. It is true that Scottish and Welsh ways are still

SCALE OF MILES



different from English ways. Many Welsh boys and girls, and some Scottish boys and girls, speak their own tongue more easily than they speak English. But English people have learnt to love Scotland and Wales, to admire their music and their dancing, and the Welsh stories of King Arthur, and Scottish ballads and the poems of Robert Burns, while Scots and Welshmen feel friendly to England and serve her in all sorts of ways, in peace and in war.

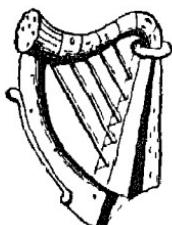
Ireland has a sadder history, for English kings found her people wilder and harder to conquer than even Scots and Welshmen. The men of Queen Elizabeth's day were shocked when they went across the Irish Sea and found Irishmen wearing rough frieze shirts and living in one-roomed cabins, with their pigs running in and out amongst them. They could not understand the Irish language, nor the way in which all the family of uncles and cousins owned the land, instead of it belonging to the squires as it did in England. They were shocked, too, by the way in which the clans fought each other instead of taking their quarrels before a judge. They tried to turn Irishmen into Englishmen. They forbade them to use their own language or their old family names. They tried to make them wear cloth, and silk doublets and hose, such as Englishmen wore. In large parts of the north of Ireland, they took the land from the Irish. They brought Scots, and even Englishmen, over to live in Ireland, and gave the land to them. They would not let the Irishmen make their own laws.

The richer Irishmen began to leave the country, to live in England or even in America. Those who stayed bought their clothes in England. The poorer Irish people grew poorer still. No one would buy their linen and frieze cloth. They grew corn and potatoes on their land, but they had to sell the corn overseas, and live on potatoes themselves. Sometimes, when the potato crop failed, men and women and children died of starvation. So it came about, that while the men and women of English and Scots descent who lived in northern Ireland, liked and respected England, those who lived in the south and west, hated her. Sometimes they came over to England to work, and frightened and hurt English people by throwing bombs into town halls or post offices. Sometimes they went across the sea to America, and became citizens of the United States. They told in that country tales of how English rule had made their lovely land poor and miserable. Sometimes they stayed at home and burnt down the houses of their landlords. Englishmen in the Houses of Parliament in London made stern laws to try to stop these things. English judges in England and Ireland punished the men who threw bombs, and burnt houses, but the Irish only hated them the more.

Yet there were English people who loved Ireland, and others who thought England had made a mistake in trying to rule Irishmen against their will, and taking their lands from them to give to strangers. These men and women tried to find

ways of helping the Irish, when their potato crops failed. They made laws to protect them against the cruel ways in which their landlords treated them. One great Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, spent many years in trying to persuade England to let Ireland rule herself by her own Parliament once more. But Englishmen were afraid to do this. They thought it would be deserting the people in northern Ireland, who looked to them for protection against the men of the south.

At last, in 1921, after much sorrow and suffering, Ireland was divided into two parts, each with a Parliament of its own. Northern Ireland, with its Parliament in Belfast, is part of the United Kingdom and also sends members to the Houses of Parliament in London. The rest of Ireland, called Eire, has its Parliament (or Dail) in Dublin, and it is in many ways like a foreign country. Perhaps, one day, bitter memories may die, and Irishmen and Englishmen will learn to work together, to make the world a better place for men and women, and boys and girls, of every race and tongue.



*St. Patrick's Harp
and
St. George's Dragon*



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

COMMONWEALTH AND EMPIRE

IF to-day we open our atlases and turn to a map of the world, it looks very different from the map that young Richard Hakluyt gazed at, over three hundred years ago. Where he read "Unknown Lands", and saw only vague coastlines, we can read names of rivers and mountains, lakes and villages, and even great cities. We can find railway routes, great ports and shipping routes between them, and a network of air routes. Who were the men who made these new maps possible, and why did they set out on such tremendous adventures?

They were men—and women, too—from many different countries. The Portuguese were the first to venture down the mysterious coast of Africa and round the Cape of Good Hope, to trade with dusky Indians in the East India islands, and on the mainland of India. The Dutch also went eastward to the East Indies, and were the first white men to settle in Cape Town and South Africa, and in some of the Pacific islands. The Spaniards sent knights and adventurers and missionaries to trade and explore and settle in Mexico and Peru, and along the western shores of North America, where the towns still bear Spanish names and have little old Spanish churches with bells in the towers which were cast in Spain. The British people, especially the English and the Scots, have taken the

English language and English laws and customs to very many parts of the world.

Sometimes these different people helped each other, as the Portuguese helped the Scotsman, David Livingstone, after he had crossed Africa for the first time. Too often they quarrelled, and fought, as if there was not enough room in all the world for everybody, and not enough good things to share. Thus, the French and the English fought one another for the possession of the wide lands of the Mississippi valley, and for the great river, St. Lawrence, in North America. They fought also for the right to set up trading stations in India, and each side bribed the Indian princes to help to drive the other away. So also, much later, the English and the Dutch fought in Cape Colony and the Transvaal, until, at last, their descendants agreed to live side by side as fellow citizens in the new Union of South Africa.

British people have gone to these far distant lands for many different reasons. Some have not been able to live happily at home. Sometimes they did not like going to their parish church. They thought that the clergyman's white surplice, the candles on the altar, or the things the parson taught them, or the words of the prayer book, were wrong. They tried to worship by themselves in barns or stables, but, in the days of Queen Elizabeth and James I, the law of the land forbade them to do this. Justices of the peace, or constables, found them out and made them pay heavy fines, and sometimes threw them into prison. So, with many tears at

leaving their quiet fields and farms, or the narrow stone-paved street of their little towns, they sailed away to the unknown shores of North America.

After terrible hardships, they built new villages for themselves; they cut down the forests, and ploughed fields, and protected themselves as best they could against the fierce Red Indian tribes. Other men and women could find no work to do at home as their lands had been taken from them to turn into sheep-walks, or they could not make enough money, by weaving or spinning, to dress and feed their children. Some of these also went to North America, and though many died on the long voyage, and others were killed by Indians, some at last managed to build houses, and to make great plantations of tobacco and cotton.

The great-grandchildren of these first English settlers in North America quarrelled with the English King, George III, and his Parliament, over a hundred and fifty years ago. They said that Parliament was trying to prevent them growing rich by trading with other lands, and was making them pay taxes, which they themselves had not been allowed to vote for in their own parliaments or assemblies. The farmers and the townsfolk shouldered their guns and, under General George Washington, marched to fight the British soldiers, and at last drove them out of the land. So these English settlers in the New World became the first citizens of the United States of America.

But English men and women were also making homes for themselves along the banks of the

St. Lawrence River, and the shores of the Great Lakes, on land which had been conquered from the French. Some, a little later, went to live in the lands round the Cape of Good Hope, which were taken from the Dutch. Yet others made an even greater venture. They sailed as far as the shores of Australia and New Zealand, which had first been explored by the Dutchman, Tasman, and the Englishman, Captain Cook. Englishmen at home had learnt wisdom from the rebellion of the first American colonies. They allowed the men and women in these new lands to have their own parliaments, to make their own laws, and to vote for their own taxes. Little by little, the colonists themselves learnt to live in peace with the Frenchmen and the Dutchmen, who had made their homes in those far lands before them. These four great countries, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, were the first British Dominions; their men and women rule themselves as freely as we do at home, but yet are all subjects of one king. They feel affection and loyalty and respect for these little islands, from which so many of their forefathers came.

But some Englishmen have gone to lands where it is not easy for white men to live all their lives. They are so hot, that they are not healthy countries for British children to grow up in. Such lands are India and Ceylon, West and East Africa, the West Indian islands, and some of the islands in the Pacific Ocean. To the greatest of these—India—the English traders, known as the East India Company,

began to sail at the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

They found in India a land where lived brown-skinned men of many different races: some tall, and not much darker in colour than men who live upon the European shores of the Mediterranean, some small and witty, some squat and very dark. Some were great horsemen and loved fighting. Some were great scholars and artists, as skilled as many Europeans in building and painting and learning. Some were craftsmen, making pots on the potter's wheel, and spinning finer muslins than any Englishman knew how to make. They were ruled by an emperor, living in Delhi. Though the men of his race had once been strong and proud, no one now troubled to obey him very much. His officers all over the country behaved like princes. The rich people did what they liked, and the poor people were miserable and unprotected.

At first the English traders struggled with the French for the right to build forts, and to buy the ivory and the muslins, the indigo and the saltpetre, which the Indians had to sell. At last, Robert Clive drove the French from India. The East India Company persuaded the Indians to grant them more and more land. There they kept good order, and Indians who lived near by sometimes came to live in the English settlements, because they felt safe there from robbers and lawless men.

Rather more than two hundred and fifty years after the first English traders came to India, a terrible thing happened. Indians were frightened by the

railways, which the Englishmen were beginning to build. The Indian soldiers who had joined the East India Company's army were angry, because they thought they might be asked to cross the sea - a thing which they thought it wrong to do. They rose against their officers. English men and women and children were killed. In the end, British officers and soldiers managed to restore order, but Parliament thought India could no longer be left to the care of the East India Company, so India became part of the British Empire. Queen Victoria was called Empress of India. First in Calcutta, and later in a magnificent new-built capital at Delhi, an Englishman, or sometimes a Scotsman, lived as Viceroy - that is, the man who represented the Queen or King in India.

Ever since those days, many Englishmen and Scotsmen have tried to serve India. They have spent years in that distant land, helping to keep good order, to teach in schools and colleges, to make roads and railways and bridges, to build hospitals, to care for the sick, to help people when their rice crops have failed and they have been near starvation. Little by little, Indian boys and girls have grown to be proud of their country. They have discovered that their forefathers were great artists and builders, and scholars and poets, when Englishmen were still unskilled and unlearned. At last, in 1947, India became self-governing again and the last English Viceroy left Delhi. But India has become not one but two nations. India itself with its capital still at Delhi is a country most of whose inhabitants are Hindu in religion. Pakistan, with a new capital at

Karachi, is peopled chiefly by Muslims, followers of the religion preached by the Prophet Mahammed several hundred years after Jesus.

Other British traders have gone to Jamaica, and the other West Indian islands to grow sugar, to Ceylon to grow tea, to the hot parts of Africa to trade for palm oil, and cocoa and ground nuts. In these countries, it is too hot for white men to work on the land themselves. At first the British traders thought there was no harm in bringing black men from Africa, and selling them to work for white men as slaves. Rather more than a hundred years ago, Englishmen at home began to think it terrible that men should be seized, and carried off from their families, and sold as a horse or a cow might be sold. Men such as William Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay, worked hard to persuade Parliament to say that there must be no more slavery in lands ruled by Great Britain. In 1833 they succeeded.

Since then, the black and brown men who toil in the sugar plantations, and the palm groves, the cocoa plantations and tea gardens, to send us the sugar and the tea and the cocoa and the bananas we like to see on our tables, and the nuts from which we get the oil to make margarine, have been free men. But they are simple folk, and they do not like to work very hard in such a hot climate, so that often they do not earn very much, and are very poor. Some of them in Africa are still partly ruled by their own chieftains, but British civil servants are sent out to help them. These are the lands called

colonies, but when the black and brown-skinned men who live and work there are ready to do so, they, too, will be allowed to rule themselves. Ceylon was the first Colony to become, in 1948, a Dominion.

Perhaps the greatest of all the adventurers in the history of the British Empire are the men and women who have gone to Africa and India, and the Pacific Islands, as missionaries, doctors and nurses. They have left their homes and their friends, without seeking anything for themselves. They have served all their lives as doctors and nurses, and explorers and teachers. They have gone alone, and often unarmed, to meet the rulers of war-like tribes. They have marched through unexplored jungles and swamps, to save men and women from slavery. They have braved the dangers of malaria and yellow fever, to bring health and teaching to dark-skinned men and women, and children.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

ALL THE WORLD OUR NEIGHBOURS

AND now, as we draw near to the end of our book, there is the sound of a heavy droning in our ears. Lo, and behold, our magic carpet has turned into an aeroplane, and set us down in the twentieth century. What a number of people we have brought with us out of the past! Branwen, in her long homespun gown, and Maximus, in his Roman breastplate, are here. Here, too, are Wott and Leofwin, in their tunics and sheepskin coats. That white-robed figure is Brother Ambrose, the monk. There are the wife of Bath, in her broad-brimmed hat, and Sir Richard Whittington, in his furred gown. Master Richard Hakluyt has brought a quill pen and an ink horn to write an account of all he sees. Parson Collins is joking with Farmer Goodfellow; Thomas Coke is already looking eagerly about him at the distant harvest fields, and John Clare, as soon as he has got over his air-sickness, will draw out paper and pencil to write down the verses which came into his head as he watched the great clouds go sailing by the aeroplane. Robert Owen and Lord Shaftesbury are watching some rosy-faced children, running along the road from school. They notice how tall and strong, and neatly dressed they are.

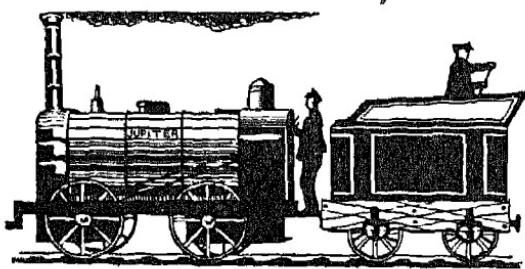
Here is the motor bus, which will take us from the aerodrome to the hotel, where we can have dinner: but the wife of Bath screams when we suggest that

she should get into it and even Parson Collins says he has never seen such a thing as a carriage without horses, and he thinks he would rather walk. So, as they all seem of the same opinion, we must set out on foot. Here is the bridge over the railway cutting. There is a clattering noise. The signal has risen, and there in the far distance is a trail of white smoke. The train is coming. All our companions crowd to the parapet of the bridge and look down. They are excited, and some are frightened, as the great engine, with its long stream-lined body, its flag of smoke, and its busy crank-shafts, draws near. Even the straight shining lines of the rails surprise them. "What is it?" they cry.

Robert Owen and Lord Shaftesbury know what it is, and even John Clare has seen something like it before—like it, and yet different! I expect Watt and Leofwin are too frightened to ask questions, but Brother Ambrose, and Whittington and Hakluyt, crowd round, eager to know how it works. Perhaps Mr. Owen or Lord Shaftesbury will explain how, when they were young, numbers of men who were interested in machines were trying to discover how the great wheels which James Watt had taught men to turn by steam, could be made to run along the ground. "It was Trevithick, the Cornishman, and Mr. Blackett and his men of Wylam Colliery in Northumberland, and George Stephenson, the engineman at Killingworth colliery, who really succeeded," they will say, "but of all of them, Stephenson was the most persevering, and it was he who persuaded Mr. Edward Pease, of

Darlington, to make a steam rail-road to carry his coals from the mines at Stockton to the river port of Darlington." "But, bless my soul!" says Robert Owen, "this is a very different sort of engine from Stephenson's Rocket. For one thing, it is very much larger. Then, the Rocket had a great tall funnel, and high wheels, and you could see its pistons and its cranks easily."

"Why yes," Lord Shaftesbury will add, "and these great coaches which are slipping past us so easily! How comfortable they look, with their padded seats, and big windows and long corridors! I suppose they belong to the railway company. Do you remember how, in the early days, if we wanted to travel in the trains, we had our own horse chaises hoisted on to trucks, and travelled in those? And the poorer people travelled in roofless waggons, rather like cattle trucks. And how people hated the locomotive at first! They said they would frighten the cows and prevent them giving milk, or that they would scare away all the foxes and put an end to hunting. But they soon got used to them, and by the time I was forty or fifty years old,



An early steam engine

railways were being built all over England, and English engineers were going to France and Germany and Italy to help to build lines there."

"Why yes," says John Clare, "but I remember when there was talk of bringing the line from London to Scotland through Stamford town, near my old home, the people would not have the horrid, noisy, dangerous thing." "Yes," we shall say, "but the railway makers would not be defeated. They took the line through Peterborough instead. That is why Peterborough grew into a big town, with railway and other engineering works, and Stamford remained a little market town. All the same, Stamford has kept its lovely old churches and houses, and there is very little that is old left in Peterborough, except the Cathedral."

"Why, that is all very interesting, but you could not make steam drive a ship, I suppose, could you?" says Richard Hakluyt. "That would be a rare thing to do!"

"It has been done," says Mr. Owen, "They say it was done first by a Scotsman, on the river Clyde, and copied from him by Robert Fulton, on the river Hudson, in the United States. Soon the steamers, as they were called, were safe enough to put out into the Channel, and I remember the day, in 1833, when the *Royal William* arrived in London docks from Canada. She had crossed the Atlantic, under her own steam, in twenty days."

"Ah, yes," says Lord Shaftesbury, "but in 1882, the crossing from New York took less than seven days. That's a wonderful speed! It makes America almost a near neighbour."

"She is a nearer neighbour to-day," we shall perhaps say. "We can cross the Atlantic in half a day, and we can talk to each other. People in Canada and South Africa, and even Australia, can hear the King speaking to them from London."

But here, the wife of Bath, who loves a joke, nudges us in the ribs with her elbow. She tells us with a chuckle, that she knows a tall tale when she hears one. She says she doesn't even know where the places are we are talking about, but even if she did, she wouldn't believe us. Why, how could we talk to anyone beyond shouting distance? If we could, it must be by magic, and though she's not ashamed to make a love charm now and again to help a young girl to find a loving husband, she's not going to deal in black magic.

But here, Maximus speaks. He says that there may be something in it. Men can do such wonderful things! In his time, they carried water from place to place on great arches. They warmed houses by hot air, and drove roads over hill and dale. He doubts not that they may do more wonderful things yet. He would like to hear what we have to say. Sir Richard Whittington agrees, and so does Brother Ambrose, and Master Hakluyt. "For," say they, "the mind of man is marvellous. It is forever, by the mercy of God, finding out new things."

So, to please them, we must try to explain how many men, working in many lands, have by one or two great discoveries drawn all the world together. First of all, we had better tell how, even before the

invention of railways, both Englishmen and Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Germans had for many years tried to find ways of driving a coach along a road without using men or animals to pull it. They were not very successful, until they discovered that steam could be used to force a piston up and down in a cylinder. They fastened the piston by a horizontal shaft to the crank of a wheel, and so made the wheel turn, as the shaft moved backwards and forwards. As soon as this discovery had been made, men began to build steam coaches, which ran along the ordinary roads of England. When Lord Shaftesbury was a young man, some of these coaches could move at fifteen miles an hour or more, and climb steep hills.

But steam coaches, we must tell our friends, were heavy and clumsy, because the water in the cylinder had to be heated by a furnace and a boiler, such as drives a steam train. This took up a great deal of room in the coach. If only some kind of heat could be made without the boiler and the fire! As soon as men began to want this, they set to work to discover how to get it. The discovery, that was



"The New Steam Carriage," 1828

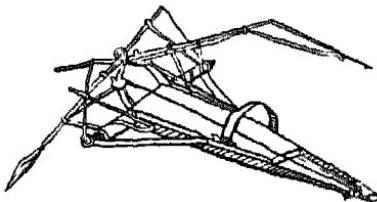
made by different men in different countries at about the same time, is what is called the internal combustion engine. That is, an engine whose wheels are driven by pressing a mixture of air and petrol into a small space inside the cylinder. Then the mixture is exploded, so that it expands and forces the piston down, and so drives the shaft and the crank, and turns the axle of the wheel.

An engine, such as this, takes up very little space. Soon, men were fitting it into small carriages which they called motor cars, or automobiles, and into bigger cars, which could carry a number of passengers. "The omnibus, which frightened you when we landed, was one of these motor buses," we shall say. "The first ones were seen in the streets of London about ten years before the first World War. Soon the old buses which had been drawn by two big horses, disappeared. Now, motorbuses carry people between most of the towns and villages of England, and comfortable motor coaches make long journeys from the big cities, to east and west, and north and south." We tell them, too, that there are big comfortable motor cars, which can run at eighty miles an hour, and little light cars, which can do forty or fifty. "All sorts of people have cars," we shall say. "They use them for business and for holidays, for taking children to school, or for travelling about the roads to sell things, rather like the old pedlars used to do. But what is more wonderful still, is that men can use those engines to fly with."

Brother Ambrose becomes much excited. "Have

they done it?" he cries. "Oh, how men longed to fly, when I was young! I heard men talk of it when I was a boy; and in the cloisters, as I sat over my carving, and made birds peeping through the rough vine leaves, or as I watched the martins making their nests under the cloister eaves, I dreamed and dreamed that perhaps one day I might find the secret."

"And the great Leonardo, the Italian artist, in my day," says Richard Hakluyt, "how many hours he spent and how near he came to success!"



Leonardo's Flying Machine

"Well, all I can say," chuckles the wife of Bath, "is that it would have been much simpler to go on pilgrimages to Jerusalem if I could have flown there instead of crossing the sea, tossing in a little bit of a boat, and then walking and riding half across Europe."

"Yes, it has been done," we tell them. "First, men tried to make great balloons, lighter than air, and to drive them with gas or petrol engines. These were dangerous, and many men died in trying to use them. Then there were men who tried to glide without engines, and men who built machines heavier than air, driven by engines like those used in cars. These men, Frenchmen and

Germans, Englishmen and Americans, were brave. They were only learning how to make aeroplanes. Every time they flew, they knew they might crash to the earth. Many of them did crash, and were killed, but the work went on. Now, men can fly all over the world. Aeroplanes carry letters and parcels and men to distant lands in less time than it took to go from London to Paris in your day, Master Hakluyt."

"Wonderful, wonderful!" they exclaim. "But what was it you said about being able to hear people speak across the world?"

[“Ah, that is the second great discovery. It all began because a blacksmith's son, called Michael Faraday, discovered that electric currents can be generated by an instrument called a dynamo. First, men succeeded in sending signals along a wire, by means of an electric current, with a needle at the end which recorded the signal. Then, an American, called Morse, thought of a code of dots and dashes to stand for the letters of the alphabet. When the needle at the end of the wire recorded the dots and dashes, they could be turned into words, and the message read. We call this the electric telegraph, and men have discovered how to wrap the wires so that they can be laid across ocean beds, so that we can send telegrams to all parts of the world by what is called a cable.]

"Later, a young Scotsman called Alexander Bell, who had gone to live in America, thought that he could send sound vibrations by electricity through the wire. He made an instrument—the transmitter—into which he could speak, at one end of a wire

which caused a disc like the drum of our ears to vibrate at the other end. This we call the telephone. It has been improved until a man in Vienna or Paris can hear when he is spoken to by a man in London.

"The last of these great discoveries was made by an Italian, called Marconi. He found that sound waves could be sent through the air without wires. It is because of his discovery that the King of England can be heard, when he speaks into a microphone, by his subjects all over the Empire. So you see, because of cars and aeroplanes, and telegrams and telephones, and wireless sets, men all over the world have become closer neighbours than the men of Yorkshire, and the men of Devon in olden days. That is one reason why we must discover ways of living together as good neighbours, and sharing the good things of the world—the food and clothes, and oil and metals we all need, helping each other—British and Americans, Frenchmen and Germans, Russians and Indians, black people and yellow people—and all the men in all the lands, in every way we can."

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Chapter One

- 1 Look at the map on page 28. Find all the names you think show settlements of early British folk, and any of English Danes or Norsemen. Notice in which part of the country they are.
- 2 Look at the plan and pictures on pages 6 and 7. How many walls and ditches had this camp? Where would the gates be?
- 3 Make a list of surnames of children in your school or class which show what work their forefathers did.
- 4 What old houses or burns or roads can you think of or find in your neighbourhood? Make a sketch map of your town or village and put them in with dates, if possible, underneath them.

Chapter Two

- 1 Read the description of the camp on page 13 and make a plan of it.
- 2 With your book shut write a description of the house where the woman and two girls lived.
- 3 Write a letter to a friend describing your walk with Maximus.
- 4 Look at the map on page 17. Why were there few villas north of York (Eboracum)?
- 5 Why could the Roman soldiers conquer the Britons? Which parts of the British Isles did they never conquer? Look at the map on page 31 and say what you notice about the place-names in these parts.

Chapter Three

- 1 Look at the picture of the house on page 21 and read again the description of Claudia's house. Would you like to have lived in such a house? If so, why?
- 2 Imagine you are a country boy coming to stay in the town you have read about in this chapter. Describe what you would see.
- 3 If you know of the remains of any Roman houses, roads, or camps near your school, mark them on your sketch map.
- 4 Make drawings of things made in Roman Britain. Write an explanation of them underneath.

Chapter Four

1. How many different sets of people who invaded Britain are mentioned in this chapter? Where did each come from? Put them on your time chart.
2. Begin to make a collection of drawings of all the different kinds of ships mentioned in this book. Write underneath the century in which each was used.
3. Look again at your chapter and write down two ways in which you might know whether the earliest Englishmen settled in your neighbourhood.
4. Find out the name and story of the Christian missionary who converted your part of this country. Draw a design for a banner in his honour.

Chapter Five

1. Make a story about some offence committed in Saxon times, and say what happened to the offender.
2. Do you think it was a good plan to make everyone act as Pothemen in Saxon times? Explain why you think as you do.
3. The people who sat on three sides of the open square described on page 45 were called "Doomsmen", in what ways was their work different from that of Jurymen to-day?
4. Make a picture to illustrate any part of this chapter. Be careful to dress your people in the sort of clothes shown on pages 60 and 62.

Chapter Six

1. With your book closed make a list of the things which Edward the Confessor disliked in England.
2. Make a drawing of a doorway or window or a pillar of a church built (a) in Saxon, (b) in Norman times. Leave space on your page to add drawings of churches built in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
3. Imagine that you are an English peasant living in a village when the new Norman lord came. Write a story about what you did and said.
4. Copy the pictures of the Roman soldiers on page 15 and the Norman soldiers on page 49. Write underneath the differences in their armour.

Chapter Seven

1. Add a drawing to the page you began showing a window or a doorway of a church built in Henry III's time. Look at the century on your time chart.
2. What was the great difference in the days of Henry III between a village in the Midlands and a village in Norfolk? Can you find any other differences which were true in your own part of the country?
3. Make a drawing of a plough in the reign of Henry III and a plough used to-day. Say underneath which you would rather use and why.
4. Try to discover how many acres there are in any cornfield you know in your parish. Why were the fields described on page 59 so much larger?

Chapter Eight

1. Think of all the reasons you can why your town, or the nearest town to your village, stands where it does. Make a sketch map and explain your answer.
2. Imagine that you have been chosen to be a watchman in your town in the reign of Edward I. Describe some of your adventures.
3. Write out an "agenda" or a list of things to be done at a court held by the Mayor and Brethren of your town on the Tuesday in Easter Week, 1297.

Chapter Nine

1. With your book shut, make a list of the things which made Alan's family discontented.
2. Why do you think the country folk (page 89) wanted to pay 4d an acre for their land instead of working for their lord?
3. If you can find the story of the peasants' journey to London in another book, read it. Then imagine that you are Alan's son John and describe his adventures.

Chapter Ten

1. Add a drawing of part of a church built in Dick Whittington's time to those you have already drawn.
2. Add a drawing of the sort of ship in which Dick Whittington sent his goods overseas to the page you began when you read Chapter Four.
3. Explain why such people as the wife of Bath and Sir Richard Whittington were important in the fifteenth century.

Chapter Eleven

1. Would you like to have been Brother Ambrose? Say why you feel as you do.
2. Copy the plan of a monastery on page 72 carefully into your book. Mark on it the church, the cloister, the dormitory and the refectory, and say for what each was used.
3. Give three reasons why King Henry VIII turned the monks out of the monasteries.
4. Do you think the visitors went the right or the wrong way to work to get fair evidence about the state of the monasteries?

Chapter Twelve

1. Imagine that you are young Richard Hakluyt. Write a letter to your father describing your journey to London.
2. What new things was it possible for boys to learn about when Richard was at school?
3. Add a drawing of a ship of Richard Hakluyt's day to your project. Look at your Time Chart to see how long after Whitby it might be when it was.
4. Read the stories of Hawkins and Drake and of the Return in Hakluyt's book.

Chapter Thirteen

1. Write out an "agenda" or list of things to be done at an Easter Vestry meeting in 1635.
2. Using the best items from all the agenda you have made, hold a Vestry Meeting in your classroom.
3. Find out whether (a) Vestry Meetings, (b) Quarter Sessions are still held. If not, or if they do not do all the work they used to do, who does it now?

Chapter Fourteen

1. Write down as many reasons as you can find why roads were bad in the reign of Charles I.
2. Look carefully at the picture on page 133 and write a description of your visit to Frost Fair.
3. Make a drawing of a coach and a covered wagon. Leave room on the page for pictures of later ways of travelling.
4. Write an adventure story about a toll-gate.

Chapter Fifteen

1. Read pages 138 and 139 again carefully and say what you think Jane Dutton's friend meant when she said, "Then, my dear, all you will see will be one blade of grass and two rabbits fighting for it."
2. Make a list of the things William Coke did to improve his Norfolk estates.
3. Imagine that you are a poor man living in a village which has just been "enclosed". Describe what has happened to you.
4. If you live in a village try to follow the suggestions at the end of this chapter. If you live in a town see whether you can discover any remains of a common which was used by the people when your town was a village. To whom does it belong now?

Chapter Sixteen

1. If you had been a member of Parliament 150 years ago what laws would you have wanted to make to protect children?
2. Write an imaginary conversation between Anthony Ashley Cooper, John Wesley and John Clare describing their boyhood.
3. If you can find anyone who will answer the questions suggested at the end of this chapter, write an account of what they tell you, and read it to your class.

Chapter Seventeen

1. Look at the picture of the inn-yard, imagine that you are the person standing on the balcony and write a description of what is happening. Where would it come on your Time Chart?
2. Read pages 154-7 carefully and pick out four reasons why towns grew large quickly when Queen Victoria was young. Look at the drawing on page 172.
3. Imagine that you have been able to find no work in your village and have gone to live in a town and work in a factory when Queen Victoria was young. Write a letter to a friend describing the town and your life in it.
4. Make a list of things which were done to help the people living in the new towns and say who did them.

Chapter 11.

1. Do you know of the school described in the Charter of Edward I? Tell us some. Who do you think it was intended for?
2. Do you know the joint benefits or rewards described in your town's charter?
3. What does your school tell what children it teaches, the right about schools for the rich and poor in your neighbourhood?
4. How would you plan a school building? Think of the subjects you like to study, where the school should stand. Have been well planned or badly planned? Give reasons.

Chapter 12.

1. With your books closed write down as many facts as you can who children were often ill and did not go to school.
2. Look at the picture of Blagdon (see page 172), compare it with the plan and picture on page 170. Which would be the healthier and pleasantest place? Why?
3. Make a list of the things you know that the charter which have been done to help children to be healthy and happy.
4. Mark on a map the public playing fields, church, and welfare centre in your town.
5. Try to find out how far it is to the park and playgrounds that are in your town or village, and how old will the trees made, where the water comes from which you eat or drinking and washing, and whether there are public baths and wash houses, and clinics for your baby brothers and sisters. If you have a map of your town in the class room, it would be interesting to mark all these places on the map.

Chapter 13.

1. If you were a member of a County Council, what committee would you like to be on? Say why.
2. What are rates used for? Is it sensible to build at high rates? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Write an account of any County Council church, library or other institution you are able to visit.
4. Who provides the water in the taps in your town or village? Where does it come from?

Chapter Twenty-one

1. Write a description of either the Irish or the Welsh people in the days before they were conquered by the English.
2. Why did King Edward I want to conquer Scotland and Wales?
3. Imagine that you are a southern Irishman who has gone to live in the United States of America in the days described on page 192 of this chapter. What would you tell your new neighbours about the Englishman?

Chapter Twenty-two

1. Explain as clearly as you can the differences between the British Dominions and the British Colonies.
2. Make a list of some of the good things British men and women have done for the black and brown-skinned people of the Commonwealth.
3. Read the story of David Livingstone or Sir Ronald Ross, or any other British explorer, missionary or doctor who has tried to help the men and women of India or Africa. Be prepared to tell the story to your class.

Chapter Twenty-three

1. Complete your sheets of drawings of boats with an early steamship and a modern liner.
2. With your book closed, make a list of the things which make us to-day feel nearer to Australia than our grandfather, felt to Paris.
3. Complete your sheets of drawings of ways of travelling with an early engine and a modern train, an early car and a modern car. Make a fresh sheet showing early and modern aeroplanes.
4. Look at the picture on page 207. Write as full a description as you can of the steam-coach. Where is the boiler? Where is the brake? How many passengers are there (a) outside, (b) inside? Why has it the royal coat of arms on the panel? Where does the driver sit? What is the curved handle he holds?

